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# THE AMERICAN IMAGO

VOL. 12

FALL

NO. 3

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*A Psychoanalytic Journal  
for the Arts and Sciences*

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## Censorship in Films and Dreams

by

John Skinner

Motion pictures are modern substitutes for the myths and fairy tales of earlier times, for films are often adaptations of older stories which reassert timeless unconscious themes. The conscious goal of the motion picture may be simple entertainment, telling a good yarn, although there is always an undisclosed, unconscious content, as there is in all creative phantasy. Make-believe is perceived at different levels of consciousness, and the creative writer is often unable to explain the origin of his phantasy, since he unwittingly expresses unrealized unconscious motivations in his writing.

We are confronted with a similar enigma in dreams, and without the benefit of psychoanalytic understanding, the dream seems confused, chaotic, unintelligible; a part of mental life discarded as unimportant on awakening.

Psychological analysis of the myth or fairy tale shows a similarity among the unconscious themes expressed in the phantasies of the emotionally discontented. The most common of these, a phantasy of noble birth, is the preoccupation of many unhappy children, and everyone has entertained similar thoughts when dissatisfied with his own imperfect, mortal parents. Stories originate as individual phantasy and by the time the fairy tale or myth is written down, the well-spring from which it flowed is often lost or the original creative impulse repressed, just as the origin of a dream may be censored and the dreamer unable to explain the meaning. We are able to test this theory in the admission of modern authors when they are asked to explain the origins of their stories, for often they do not consciously know the meaning of the symbols which they have chosen.

This is true in the instance of Lewis Carroll, who wrote one of our favorite modern fairy stories, *Alice's Adventures*

*in Wonderland.* Lewis Carroll was questioned throughout his lifetime concerning the symbolism of the story, and was unable to give an intelligible answer to his readers. Just as the first myths were spoken and could be written only after man had invented an alphabet, Lewis Carroll first told the story of Alice in Wonderland to a group of children on a holiday outing. *The Hunting of the Snark* is one of the most enigmatic poems in the English language, and when pressed for an explanation, Lewis Carroll wrote, "Of course you know what a Snark is? If you do, please tell me: for I haven't an idea of what it is like." The origins of his stories were inexplicable, and he confesses this: "I added my fresh ideas, which seemed to grow of themselves upon the original stock; and many more added themselves when, years afterward, I wrote it all over again for publication . . . but whenever or however . . . *it comes of itself*. I cannot set invention going like a clock, by any voluntary winding up . . . Alice and the Looking Glass are made up almost wholly of bits and scraps, single ideas which come of themselves."

The similarity between motion pictures and phantasy was recognized in the choice of one film title, *Dreams Money Can Buy*, and many current motion pictures are elaborate technicolor fabrications of adventure, romance, and love. There is a similar unreality in the architecture of the motion picture theatre, also a dream which money can buy, and "picture palaces" are still named for "Versailles," "Monte Carlo," the "Hippodrome" or the "Coliseum," recalling the homes or playgrounds of former nobility. For the price of admission, the poor man may enter the palace and temporarily deny his earth bound existence, one of the original functions of the motion picture in America. The first audiences were working class, often immigrant, on the East Side of New York, or in other new industrial cities. Audiences were unfamiliar with English and the nickelodeon offered a cheap, visual form of entertainment to vary the monotony of existence in a raw, young mechanized country.

The dream symbol was apparent in one of the first popular films, "*The Life of the American Fireman*, in which

the fire-chief, after a harrowing dash to the fire, saves his own child, but at the end of the film, falls from the chair to discover he was dreaming. The sexual symbol was also apparent early, for censorship of the film began after *Dolorita in the Passion Dance* was shown on the Atlantic City Board-Walk in 1894. Social conscience was exerted to prevent the enjoyment of forbidden emotional pleasures, just as censorship is employed to disguise the content and meaning of dreams which permit the dreamer to participate in activities forbidden while he is awake. In these two early films there is a repressed expression of sexuality and aggression, the two emotions most frequently forbidden by parental and social authority.

The film writer is regulated by a similar censorship which he must exert consciously when writing for motion pictures, for he is forbidden to portray emotional situations which do not conform with acceptable social standards: romantic monogamy, mother love, friendship, hatred of accepted villains, or anger toward commonly recognizable enemies. Many sexual themes are forbidden, controversial social problems are taboo, and the eternal verities of God and the Devil may not be questioned.

Story themes are often consciously borrowed from mythology, as in Eugene O'Neil's *Mourning Becomes Electra* and George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, but there important differences between Greek mythology and the later romances. In the Greek myth, personal conflict was open and terrible; desires were obvious and compelling; life was inexorable tragedy beyond the control of man. Following the development of Christianity, personal emotions were expressed symbolically in the romances of the Middle Ages, which was the first dependence on symbolism in world literature. In a survey of *The Classical Tradition*, Professor Gilbert Highet comments on the symbolism of *The Romance of the Rose*, the first of the imaginative romances: "We should therefore take the dream-form, together with the sexual symbolism of rose, garden, tower, etc., as expression of the intense subconscious life which was produced by the new conception

of romantic love, in an extremely difficult and tense relationship. That tension, and its expression by symbolism, are not classical but modern." Psychoanalysis has examined a similar phenomenon in dreams and has shown that beyond the remembered dream lies the deeper, unknown world of the unconscious. Children, with fewer defenses against their emotionality, realize this quickly, and analyze their dreams with a clarity uncommon in the adult, whose defenses against unconscious mental life are more firmly established.

Although the conscience of the adult attempts to prohibit the realization of forbidden wishes, this is not an entirely effective censorship, and despite rigid taboo, many inadmissible thoughts and wishes are expressed in dreams, just as many forbidden experiences are represented in motion pictures, despite rigid censorship. Psychologically, the motion picture serves the same purpose as the dream and fairytale. We are allowed a short journey into the unconscious, a guilt-free moment in which to experience emotions otherwise repressed. Drama has always been used in this manner, and the test of classic writing has been its ability to create a situation which is universally appealing, ensuring our identification with the characters because of the universality of a theme which appeals to our collective unconscious.

The value of motion pictures as "escape" is commonly accepted. Through phantasy, we are released temporarily from the intolerable pressure of painful reality, just as sleep and dreams free us at night from daily life. Many films assure us that everything will turn out all right in the end, and that worry or protest against this worst-of-all-possible-worlds is foolish. To describe the motion picture as solely "escapist" is a partial truth, for the film story is written by an author who expresses his individual phantasy in the writing, and the emotional value of the film is determined by the director, the actor, and the audience. While many actors protest against being typed, it is probable they are cast in the same role repeatedly because of a characteristic personality structure which is convincing to the audience.

Creative activity, when used solely for narcissistic gratification, loses its value as universal communication. Many motion pictures are unsatisfactory to the audience, because we remain incredulous and therefore unsympathetic with the actor in his role. The timeless artistry of the classic appeals to us without conscious awareness, for we accept the problems of the characters as our own.

Charlie Chaplin is one contemporary actor whose appeal is not restricted to audiences which understand narrowly defined, national symbols. He expresses the universal problems of mankind and when he is the clown, the little man who suffers, we laugh with sympathy, as we recognize ourselves, our sorrows and our ridiculousness. He reminds us in *City Lights* that the world does not always reward love and friendship, and that *Modern Times* may become so complex that our wishes and desires become overwhelmed and destroyed by material values. Chaplin injects his own personality into his films, his personal frustrations and wishes into the characterizations which he has perfected, but his wish for love and understanding is universal and his bewilderment is a world heritage. Chaplin has said that he tries to appeal to each member of his audience: "And when all is said and done, the foundation of all success is only a knowledge of human nature, whether you're tradesman or innkeeper, a publisher or an actor — There is no mystery in making the public laugh. My whole secret is in keeping my eyes open and my wits wide-awake for everything capable of being used in my films. I have studied human nature because, without knowledge of it, I should have done nothing in my calling."

In *Mourning Becomes Electra*, Eugene O'Neil used the Greek myth as a framework for his study of Electra in New England, but the film was consistently unsatisfactory, contrary to the opinion of a committee which awarded it an annual film prize. The characterizations were flat, broadly drawn, and when the actors wished to create sympathy for the characters, there was sometimes laughter from the audience. It is inconceivable to the conscience of the average

audience that a girl may love her father with frank sexual desire or that a son might openly wish to possess his mother. The tragedy of the Greek dramatization of Oedipus is the fact that the son loves his mother unknowingly, and that he slays the king without realizing he is his father. However, such unrealized tragedy was not the intention of the Hollywood production, and when the son showed a mawkish love for his mother in her bedroom, the audience laughed. Similarly, when the daughter caressed her father on the doorstep, beneath prim, New England elm trees, the aim of the play miscarried, and the audience giggled.

Laughter is a convenient release of tension, and while each person in the audience understood the intention of the actor, even unconsciously understood the Oedipal situation, he defended himself against his own forbidden impulses by laughing at the ridiculous behavior of the screen-players.

*Holiday in Mexico*, a comedy, was avowedly based on a father-daughter relationship. There was little to recommend it as a film, but it is psychologically interesting and serves to illustrate the way in which the author and producer of motion pictures unintentionally express unconscious emotions in their inventions. The endless plot is primarily concerned with a motherless young girl who lives with her father, the American Ambassador to Mexico. The girl has no interest in boys her own age, but is frankly in love with her father, who tucks her into bed, indulges her whims, and uses her as his official hostess. She is jealous of his interest in a former sweetheart, a mysterious, blond European opera singer, whom the father had known when he was a student. In one scene the daughter follows her father and the singer to a night club to spy on their love-making, just as the young child spies on the activities of his parents when barred from their personal life. In desperation, the father turns to his old friend for help in managing his daughter, but the girl transfers her love to the friend, an elderly musician, only to be disappointed when he tells her he cannot love her since he is married and a grandfather. The dilemma is resolved by having the young girl sing a concert in Hollywood

Bowl, dressed in a bride-like costume of white lace. She sings "Ave Maria" in narcissistic isolation, removed from all warmth and life, standing in a large, shell-like enclosure, a young and virginal bride of her unknown unconscious. In this film the audience showed no self-consciousness, laughed at the appropriate times, and everyone felt very happy about the ending, as is usually true in American films.

However, the reaction of a young man of twelve to the film warns us against generalizing about audience reactions to films, for he interpreted the story to suit his individual phantasy. When asked about the film, he said he liked it very much, and when pressed to tell what he thought had happened, said "Why, she married Jose Iturbi, of course." As an adolescent, on the threshold of his own Oedipal conflict, he unconsciously understood the implication of the film, accepted it, and when the climax did not suit his phantasy, he invested the story with the meaning which he wished it to have, and permitted the girl to marry her father-substitute.

Original story themes are often perverted in the motion picture and the plot of many novels is unrecognizable following Hollywood alteration. This is rationalized as necessary for "audience appeal," but there is also the possibility that the film makers must deflect the intention of the author in order to express their own personal desires and intentions. The world of play-acting is a phantasy world, socially valuable and desirable, but the role of the actor has many personal, unconscious values, as Otto Fenichel demonstrated in his paper, "*On Acting*." He described the magical quality of acting, which is often seen in psychological work with members of the picture colony. It is not accidental that Hollywood is associated with aberrant behavior or that a highly narcissistic, individualistic, and near-psychotic adjustment is often seen in the personal life of many film stars and screen writers or producers.

Motion pictures also pervert the roles of men and women, or reverse their sexual functions, expressing relationships divorced from accepted reality. One popular theme is the

rivalry between men and women, and while this is easily observed in everyday life, may be explained psychoanalytically, and resolved by psychoanalysis, there is no similar resolution in the film treatment of this problem.

A recent picture, *Adam's Rib*, illustrated this clearly. The husband and wife are engaged in the same profession, law, and are bitter rivals. The wife defends a woman who has shot her husband, and wins the case, although the defendant is the confessed assailant. There is no tenderness in the husband-wife relationship of the two lawyers, only hostility, and although there is a pretended resolution of their conflict, at the end of the film, we learn that the wife intends to enter a political race with the hope of defeating her husband in his campaign for a judgeship. This theme is endlessly repeated in motion pictures in this country, for American films seldom portray a love relationship with tenderness, dignity, or realistic fidelity.

In *Adam's Rib* the husband's only rival expresses an adolescent love for the wife and writes love songs to her. He is no serious threat to the marriage, but is used by the wife in her aggression toward the husband rather than as a genuine love-object. It is quite clear that the husband regards his rival as an effeminate young man, not a serious rival, and that he is unimportant as a competitor. What is over-looked by the producer is that the wife must choose a weak man, a man without masculinity, since she is unable to love men, because she fears them and expresses this anxiety in an unconscious, hostile rivalry. This film duo seems to prefer stories with such themes, and the theme of masculine-feminine rivalry is extended into their later film, *Pat and Mike*, in which the heroine is an Amazonian athlete and the hero her bewildered, aging, impotent manager.

The American film often fails to portray a loving relationship between men and women because the story is based on an unconscious homosexual theme. This is apparent in *The Outlaw*, which was publicized prior to release by posters advertising the generous bosom of the female star. In the film the woman has no satisfactory relationship with either the

young hero or the old outlaw, and the only continuing friendships are among men.

The story is purportedly based on the legend of Billy the Kid, who meets a fatherly outlaw with a mistress who is the heroine of the story. Billy is very like the heroine in appearance, lacks the masculine qualities usually associated with the desperado, and is cast as a baby-faced gunman rather than as the rugged frontiersman, while the elderly outlaw is an impotent old man, whose shooting days are over.

Billy and the girl first meet at night in a stable, where the heroine tries to shoot Billy in the dark. She is represented as a dark, aggressive, savage young woman, who tries to kill Billy to avenge the shooting of her brother. While Billy is over-powering her, she tries to stab him with a pitch fork, and this tender scene ends with the young lovers wrestling in the hay, and the audience is left to its own conclusions about the outcome of their meeting.

Billy is wounded several reels later, and the old outlaw sends him to the heroine's home, where he is nursed back to health. Again, the scenes are full of hostile love, for in one sequence the girl is ambivalent in her love for Billy, and considers stabbing him. The heroine's Aunt also dislikes him and is almost successful in having his eyes pecked out by a ferocious rooster. When the outlaw returns, he is surprised that the two young people have fallen into desperate love, although he unconsciously engineered the relationship, but Billy gallantly agrees to forego his love of the girl in return for his horse, which the older outlaw now owns. From this time on, the plot becomes bewilderingly complex, but again the outlaw and Billy leave together and the girl is left behind. Billy returns to chastise the girl, who has put salt in his canteen instead of drinking water, and to punish her, he ties her to a tree near a desert pool before deserting her again.

At the climax of the film, there is a shooting scene between Billy and the fatherly outlaw. Billy is known as a ruthless fighter and unchallenged marksman, which contrasts strangely with his appearance as a slender, undeveloped adolescent,

but he will not draw his gun to shoot the outlaw, who goads Billy by firing shells until his hands are scratched and his ear lobes notched. Billy stands passively by, and submits to this symbolic castration by the older man, as though in penance for a sexual defeat of the fatherly outlaw. The unconscious homosexual theme is repeated in this same section of the film by the sheriff, a lifelong friend of the outlaw, who accuses the outlaw of infidelity, of abandoning him for Billy, and cries in his desperation and anger. Since some resolution is required for this three million dollar case-history, the sheriff and the outlaw shoot one another, and Billy starts to leave on his horse, returning at the last moment to grudgingly take the girl onto the saddle behind him while they ride slowly away toward the setting sun and into the distant hills.

The meaninglessness of the relationship between Billy and the girl is particularly striking in this picture, almost as though any warm bond between men and women is forbidden, and in one scene the heroine moves restlessly across the background, her head unseen, while only the fabulous, over-developed, three million dollar insignia of her sexuality is visible. She is so unimportant that she is faceless, and only her rigid, phallic breasts are photographed.

There is a similarity between the themes of *The Outlaw* and an earlier motion picture, *Red River*, also concerned with the life of cowboys. The film opens with the hero bidding farewell to the heroine, who cannot accompany him to Texas to seek his fortune because the venture is dangerous. He gives her a bracelet which was once his mother's and shortly after their separation, the girl is killed when the wagon train is attacked by Indians. He does not return to learn the girl's fate, presumably because it is too far away, although the smoke of the burning wagon is visible.

A dazed young man wanders into the camp next morning and joins the hero and his friend, telling of the destruction of the wagon train. The hero also verifies the girl's death during an Indian attack on his own party, and kills an Indian wearing the bracelet which the hero gave to the girl as a token of their engagement. During a quarrel, the hero

takes the young man's gun and the boy threatens to kill the hero if he ever tries to do this again.

Many years later the hero has become a ruthless, successful rancher, who has never married, mourns his lost love, and has invested himself emotionally in the young man, now almost a son, who wears the bracelet once given to the rancher's sweetheart. The physical appearance of the young man in both films is strikingly similar and neither is typical of the husky frontiersman, for each is a callow, shy, inarticulate adolescent, renowned as marksmen.

*Red River* is primarily concerned with the story of a heroic cattle drive from Texas to Kansas during a drought. During the drive the hero becomes a harsh, tyrannical, arrogant leader who threatens to hang two men who deserted the drive. The young man saves their lives by shooting the hero in the leg, takes away his gun, and assumes responsibility for the drive. He humiliates the hero in a symbolic castration as he had once been humiliated when he met the rancher, robbing him of his leadership, potency, and his masculinity. The young man meets a girl during the drive and they fall in love during an Indian raid on the wagon-train. She is represented as a stoical, heroic young woman, probably travelling with gamblers and light ladies to the roaring West, and in the love scene between the two young people, she slaps the young man for a fancied insult. He leaves her, from a sense of duty, as his fatherly protector had done, and when he and the girl and the rancher are reunited at the end of the drive, which the young man had achieved for the rancher and not for personal greed, the two men are reunited in their friendship by the girl, who threatens to shoot them if they continue to ignore the fact that they love one another. The film closes with the two men shaking hands and the audience feels happy that the father and son are reunited in a love which is encouraged and required by the woman. The major theme in the story is the love of the rancher and the young man, while women are represented as strong, capable, sexually attractive but aggressive and protective heroines.

Many film heroines are remarkable for their lack of femininity and are often painted, bleached, shellacked women of the screen, as coldly uniform as mannequins. In a film which purported to be surrealistic, *Dreams Money Can Buy*, the actors were caricatured in a sequence where mannequins performed the formal, stylized gestures perpetuated in the Hollywood cliches of feminine behavior, while the men were clothing-store dummies.

Such derogation of true femininity is perhaps common in the phantasy of men who fear and dislike women to an extent that woman's beauty must be marred and blurred by a facade of brashness. The Hollywood woman is often so aggressively feminine that she is no longer a woman, only a mannequin. In the Broadway production of *On the Town*, the heroine was a young, desirable, womanly dancer, but in the Hollywood film, she is introduced by an unnecessary sequence added to the original story. She is first a young teen-ager adept at sports, a dancer, a swimmer, and a fencer. She boxes with five men, whom she knocks out and sits on, spraddles through awkward exercises in a gymnasium, and is shown in the same sequence as the epitome of feminine loveliness in the kitchen and drawingroom.

In the musical revue, *Inside U.S.A.* the ballet of Tiger Lily portrays a woman as sinister, destructive, and murderous. The ballet is humorous, but in most humorous phantasies the creator laughs at his fears to buttress an uncertain courage. Tiger Lily is suspected of having pushed her husband off a cliff, and is defended in court by a psychiatrist who is blinded by her beauty and sensuality. She wins her case and then entices the psychiatrist to a lonely spot where she pushes him off a cliff to his death, as she had done to her husband.

A similar portrayal of dangerous, omniverous women is presented in the spider ballet of Ballet Theatre in which the female spiders eat the luckless hero, devouring him alive.

When women are described in these terms, they must represent the unconscious images of men who fear women as frightening and threatening human beings. There is a

similar depreciation of women who are so aggressively feminine that they are no longer real women, but more often women whose intention is to defeat men with an alluring and destructive beauty. This troubled relationship between men and women is reflected in many mystery films, some with such tenderly sentimental titles as *Kiss the Blood Off My Hands*, or *Secret Fury*, which was advertised with the question: "Could she kiss and kill and not remember?"

The origin of this deep, unconscious fear of women is described by Dr. Martin Grotjahn in an incisive description of *The Primal Crime and the Unconscious*. Dr. Grotjahn illustrates the primary, unconscious crime which precedes the familiar wish to overthrow the father, the Oedipal crime, by reminding us that we pass through an earlier period of hostility toward the mother, at which time we must destroy our emotional attachment to her in order to prepare for the later conflict with the father. Dr. Grotjahn feels that evidences of this struggle are seen in the attitudes of men toward women and in the later creative activity of the adult; in stories and plays: "Our interest in crimes as reported in the newspapers or in murder mysteries, in movies and books, is another proof of those criminal desires of long forgotten times which still lie in us, but have been laboriously controlled. It is easier for us to participate now as an on-looker, of other people's crimes and punishments than to look into ourselves and to discover them within ourselves and so suffer all the pain of guilt and shame.

"Intolerance is the projection of guilt; tolerance is the identification, or at least the partial identification and acceptance of one's own part in every crime. Tolerance means a recognition of common features between anyone's crimes and one one's own desire. In the tragedy this is enacted before our eyes; it may be in real life or on the stage. 'Entertainment', which is quite different, but still related to art, denies the identification with the criminal or the hero of the tragedy, and finally denies the existence of tragedy by means of a happy ending. . .

"The earliest crime to be discovered both in the history

of the race and in the development of the individual seems to be patricide. But the crime which antedates it—on an historically older level and even more deeply repressed in the unconscious of all of us—is the murder or rape of the mother. The mother whom Oedipus finally possessed after slaying his father, is not the all-powerful, all-knowing true woman, but she is already the woman of the patriarchic era, already dethroned and degraded to the status of the father's chattel.

"The mother in the pre-oedipal phase is the woman who gives life and who can take it away. Her dominance is absolute and man fears her mortally and eternally. In the East she is symbolized as the Great Goddess. The struggle against her is symbolized, for instance, in the Greek's struggle against the Amazons. Before the oedipal situation can arise and be resolved to make way for the later development, there must be the struggle with the mother. The hatred of man against woman is a mixture of retaliation, fear and envy . . . It is possible that the mother image of this deepest unconscious level was not murdered like the father on the oedipal level. She was dethroned, degraded, stripped of her power by other means, by the first rape. This probably was less a sexual act and showed very little, if any, tenderness and love. It was an act of power, hatred, and animal conflict . . ."

Such unresolved, unconscious conflicts with the primal mother seem to be reflected in the women in comic books, who are so often sinister, dangerous women, inimical to men, murderous and treacherous but seldom loving.

It is possible to test the unconscious meaning of films in the study of the dreams of patients in psychotherapy. One boy of ten said to another boy, "Do you ever dream you're fighting the bad man in the movies and he turns out to be your father and you turn into a ghost and come back and kill him?" Forbidden aggression is released in the dreams of children, but the dreams of adults are sometimes dreamed publicly as motion picture productions. Perhaps the secret furies of all men are possible because they are not remembered or are soon forgotten upon awakening when the repressive author-

ity of conscience is asserted again. A similar experience may be realized while we are awake, seated in the darkened theatre, protected from the observation of others while we spy out the secrets of film characters.

Several psychoanalytic writers have considered the Oedipal problems expressed in *Hamlet*, notably Dr. Ernest Jones in *Hamlet and Oedipus*. The film presentation of *Hamlet* may have relied on psychoanalytic studies or may express the intuition of the producer, but the relationship between Hamlet and his mother was clearly shown, as in the full mouth kiss between them when Hamlet sits morosely through the wedding feast, and his love of Ophelia is without fire.

Confirmation of the Oedipal theme was offered by one patient who saw the film and dreamed the same night: "My own mother came to me, scantily and sensuously clad." During the same week, he had seen the French film, *Beauty and the Beast*, after which he dreamed: "I was arguing with my father. He is very masculine and potent. He overcomes what I want to do and I am glad this could happen; that he could control me by physical force. He grabbed my wrists and pushed me down." Although the patient had accepted his love of his mother intellectually and recognized the derogatory attitude which he had shown toward his weak and passive father, together with his fear of him as a rival, he protested that these dreams might not give a true picture of his early relationship with his parents, feared that he might dream such things because he had learned intellectually of the Oedipal problem, and asked: "Why, twenty-five years later, do you still want to possess the mother?" At this point, he stopped abruptly, laughed, and said he had recalled suddenly what he had told his friends at eighteen when he was in the Army, where he often boasted of his sexual relationships: "I'll lay any woman in the world except my mother," which he recognized as a defense against his deeper wishes and an attempt to ward off the unconscious sexual attraction of his mother. He was relieved by the dream about his father, who prohibited the patient from

acting out forbidden impulses, the function of conscience when it represents an introjection of the forbidding parent and the ultimate acceptance of authority as a defense against the forbidden.

Some motion pictures are obvious "escape mechanisms," and by now the average audience is sophisticated enough to recognize the vicarious enjoyment of murder mysteries, jungle stories, and other openly escapist themes. Such enjoyment indicates the enormous amount of personal dissatisfaction which is drained off in the films, however temporarily. It is difficult to understand why the same stories, the same plots, and the same emotional conflicts are produced with such monotonous regularity, although they are obviously profitable. Box office receipts dictate the selection of many stories, but we must also consider why such films are perennial successes and are patronized year after year. Many people dislike a story with a new point of view and mistrust a theme which does not reassure them with accepted arguments and attitudes. A social censorship which is active and rigid forbids the filming of many subjects considered objectionable, regardless of how valuable these films might be socially and educationally.

The enjoyment of the motion picture is an essentially passive activity, which does not permit participation by the audience in the expression of genuine emotion. The film is make-believe, removed from reality, and does not allow the audience to love a true object or defy an honest enemy. For this reason, the actor probably reaps a greater benefit, since he acts "as if" he were the lover or the hero while the audience is denied active participation. The actor receives the additional reward, greater in the legitimate theatre, of the adulation and love of the audience and he can believe again that he is the sole preoccupation of the world, as he once believed when his known world centered its total interest on him in the cradle.

The heroine in *All About Eve* reflects this attitude clearly when she expresses how she feels about applause in the theatre: "I've listened, back-stage, to people applaud. It's

like—like waves of love coming over the footlights and wrapping you up—Imagine, to know, every night, that different hundreds of people love you. They smile, their eyes shine—you've pleased them, they want you, you belong. Just that alone is worth anything." Individuals who are unable to express emotions satisfactorily on a reality level are perhaps the best movie audience. An adolescent girl of fifteen expressed her first interest in boys by intense crushes on male movie stars. In reality, she feared boys, was tongue-tied with them, but was passionately fond of movie stars, which her other friends could not understand. She covered the walls of her bedroom with their pictures, but there was only one picture of a girl—an ingenue who represented an idealized conception of herself as a woman. She was puzzled about her interest in movie stars, but said, "I think the whole problem leads back to boys. I can get a crush on a movie star because he's married, has a family, children, everything; I can dream, can't I?" She said that she was afraid of boys because their sexuality frightened her and she was always worried for fear she would do or say the wrong thing. A screen lover made no demands, stimulated no troublesome emotions which required reciprocation, and the darkness of the theatre concealed her forbidden sexual interests. Her fear of boys was directly related to her fear of a cold, narcissistic father, who frustrated her emotional life, criticized her for chewing gum because it reminded him of her baby habit of sucking her thumb, and expressed an open preference for a younger brother. The men in her life were enemies, which she had learned, first, from her father and later through her displacement by her younger brother.

The ultimate test of emotional adjustment is the ability to express appropriate feelings in day-to-day situations without the necessity for substitute emotional gratification in artificial forms of expression. We do not express love or exhaust hatred by identifying with shadows on a screen, for while there may be momentary release of tension, the original, unexpressed emotions return, often with additional force; the neurosis of the individual is never healed by the effect

of a motion picture, and through movie addiction as a substitute for life, the emotionally deprived adult sits passively in a regressive darkness, while only the favored live and love in the luminous life of the screen.

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## Pacts, Possessions, and the Alcoholic

by

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Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?  
Who hath contention? Who hath wounds  
without cause? They that tarry long  
at the wine, they that go to seek mixed  
wine. Look not thou upon the wine; at  
the last it biteth like a serpent, and  
stingeth like an adder.

Prov. 23-32.

Alcoholism has a number of dissimilar manifestations as compared with all remaining mental illnesses. Unlike other disorders which have been re-embedded in a psychological and medical context, intemperance retains its unique tie to moral issues. The medieval holdover of regarding the mentally diseased as an inveterate sinner possessed by an evil spirit finds most direct expression in the populace's reaction to the inebriate. Both he and the instruments of his illness — alcohol and its purveyors — have instigated religious-political movements in their opposition.

In this paper we shall first elaborate some of these distinctive aspects of alcoholism which set it apart from other mental diseases. The ideologies of associations organized by non-alcoholics and alcoholics to combat problem drinking will be scrutinized to highlight the peculiar nature of drunkenness. This perusal will be employed as a springboard for the presentation of a prevalent unconscious fantasy of problem drinkers. It is suggested that this fantasy provides at least

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partial explanation for the variant regard in which alcoholism is held both by its besotted victim and the condemnatory public. Finally, the general implications of this fantasy for the organization of the psychopathic personality's superego will be discussed.

### ALCOHOLISM AND MORALITY

O true believers, surely wine, and games of chance, and idols, and divining arrows, are an abomination of the work of Satan; therefore avoid them that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissension and hatred among you, by means of wine and gambling, and to divert you from remembering God, and from prayer: Will ye not therefore abstain from them?

The Koran - 5th Cl. The Table

Alcoholism boasts the singular notoriety of being the only psychological illness in modern times which has provoked the organization of a morally-toned international political movement. The temperance movement, which exults that it has upon it "the impress of the finger of God (28, p. 11)," once attained the position of the largest third political party in the United States. It remains an active though somewhat vitiated force.

There was no vitiation however when its proponents thundered: "drunkards shall not inherit eternal life, but must have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone (9, p.2)," and that to die a drunkard is to be "ushered into the presence of your angry Judge, only to hear the sentence, 'Depart, thou drunkard (29, p.10)!' "

Closer scrutiny of temperance pronouncements permits an initial identification of themes which we shall pursue further in our examination of the depth imagery of the alcoholic. It is as if — to our own surprise — these righteously indignant citizens commanded an accurate resonance with the inebriate's unconscious conceptions.

First we note that alcohol is frequently personified in

temperance publications. Greeley (18, p.3) labels alcohol a "raging ' mocker', a heating, corrupting, infuriating poison." Rush (41, p.5) argues that spirits "produce not only falsehood, but fraud, theft, uncleanness, and murder. Like the demoniac mentioned in the New Testament, their name is 'Legion,' for they convey into the soul a host of vices and crimes." Alcohol is denounced by Marsh (28, p.6) as a "withering demon" that turns man into a beast, a fool, a devil; it reduces the finest minds to the merest insignificance. Alcohol is thus not only perceived in animistic terms, it also flourishes a demoniac quality, e.g., ' mocker' is one of the many names borne by the Devil.

The temperance writings further view the alcoholic as a scion of Satan who has defied God. There is repeated reference in temperance literature to the red paint with which Satan daubs the drunkard's nose in order to mark his recruits. Edwards (11, p.3) is his most gentle self when he writes that alcohol forms an unnecessary, artificial, and dangerous appetite. The user shows he "is not satisfied with the proper gratification of those appetites and passions which God has given him . . . and in doing this he rebels against God." With increasing virulence Edwards goes on to aver that alcohol "excites men to rebel against Him (God)" and that it is "hostile to the moral government of God (*ibid.*, p.26)." Marsh (28, p.8) declares in manner not unusual in temperance publications that alcohol has:

raised up an army . . . in every village, who wish for no Sabbath, and no Bible, and no Savior, and who cry out with stammering tongues, 'Away with him, crucify him.' It has, without doubt, been the most potent of all the emissaries of Satan, to obliterate the fear of the Lord, turn men away from the Sabbath and the Sanctuary, steel them against the word, the providence, and grace of God, stupefy the conscience, bring into action every dark and vile passion, and fill up with immortal souls the dark caverns of the earth. Let a man, day by day,

hover around a dram shop, and sip and sip at his bottle, and the devil is sure of him . . . . He holds that man by a chain which nothing but omnipotence can break.

In this last quote we are also made aware of a certain dichotomising of tippling and religious fervor. This antithesis finds clear expression in the taboo of many primitive tribes upon the intake of alcohol by an officiator or participant for many hours or even days preceding a religious service. The Euahlayi people believe that if a medicine man has many spirits in him, he must not drink hot or heating drinks. These drinks would drive them away. Also, spirits would never enter a person defiled by the white man's 'grog'. The Zambesi rainmaker, in order to keep his spirits with him, never touches alcohol. The ancient kings of Egypt were restricted to a prescribed amount of wine per day. Plutarch claims that they never drank at all, because *alcohol is the blood of beings who fought against the gods* (this author's italics). More recently Marsh (*ibid.*, p.19) demands, "O what has he, who drinks the cup of the Lord, to do with the the cup of devils." The Bible too propounds a dissonance between winebibbing and piety: "Ye be not drunken with wine . . . but filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18)." Liquor is prohibited sale in many American communities on Sunday, the Lord's day.

It is as if one has a choice of consecration to the Lord or to alcohol. The Lord abhors occupying the same human vessel which is host to drink. Dickinson (9) gives utterance to this view as he professes that those who value their soul must realize that use of intoxicating drink:

may grieve the Holy Spirit, whose presence alone can insure salvation. Indeed, to say nothing of the deadening influence of such liquor on the conscience, unless heaven and hell can mingle together, we cannot surely, expect God to send *his* Spirit to cooperate with *that* which is peculiarly offensive to the most devoted and self-denying of his friends, and which

Satan employs, more than any other agent in fitting man for his service.

The reader may also mark the attribution of a certain ensnaring and uncanny quality to alcohol as it demoniacally attains a position of dread dominance over its victim. M'Illavine's (30) pronouncements are not unrepresentative as he argues that while our country is supposedly free, yet here, "it groaneth and travaileth in pain, to be delivered from the bondage of this corruption." He deplores that while we would resist so heartily any invader to these shores, with strong drink we permit ourselves to be "enslaved," "to have a polluting foot trod upon our land," "to have our families ravaged, to break thousands upon the wheels of its tortures." He laments that:

It seems as if some foul demon had taken his seat upon the breast of the nation and was holding us down with the dead weight of a horrid nightmare, while he laughed at our calamity and mocked at our fear — when our fear came as desolation, and our destruction as a whirlwind (*ibid.*, p. 5).

Anyone who toys with alcohol may find himself its surprised and hapless gull because of the:

. . . insidious operation of strong drink upon all the barriers we may set up against excess; so secretly does it steal upon the taste, . . . undermines the deepest resolutions of him who imagines himself in perfect security . . . that no individual who permits himself to use ardent spirit moderately has any valid security that he will not become a victim to its power (*ibid.*, p. 10).

Thus alcohol possesses peculiarly invasive and eneroaching characteristics. We are reminded that Bulgarians, before drinking, make the sign of the cross to drive Satan from the liquor. In this way they prevent the Devil from entering the body. Frazer, similarly recounts in the *Golden Bough* that in the Congo state when a chief drinks, he rings

a bell at each draught. At the same time a boy brandishes a spear in front of him "to keep at bay the spirits which might try to sneak into the old chief's body by the same road as the *massanga* (beer)." And M'Ilvaine adds that we must "stand guard at every avenue by which it (intemperance) could come in." This trespassing object has the power to control the will and behavior of any man. Further, it uses its dominance in a viciously anti-social direction:

It (alcohol) breaks down the conscience, . . . increases the courage, makes man flout at law and right, and hurries him to the perpetration of every abomination and crime. Excite a man by this fluid, and he is bad enough for anything. He can lie, and steal, and fight, and swear, and plunge the dagger into the bosom of his dearest friend. No vice is too filthy, no crime too tragic for the drunkard (30, p. 5).

Correspondingly, a man is alienated from God by intoxicating drink. Hear the quote from Judge Cranch (11, p. 19):

. . . (spirits) dim that heavenly light which the Almighty has implanted in our bosoms to guide us through the obscure passages of our pilgrimage, . . . quench the Holy Spirit in our hearts . . . it is the ruin of the *soul* which they produce. . . .

Inside the organism alcohol does successful battle with the individual's godly spirit.

It is little wonder then that the temperance movement evinced that jubilant, crusading spirit which accompanies the performance of work blessed by the Supreme Being. Note the typical triumphal rejoicing in the following quotes:

. . . (by temperance) thousands of these miserable men may be brought into the kingdom of God. The strong chain that has been thrown around them by the 'prince of the power of the air' is broken . . . Conviction of sin is fastened upon their conscience.

Gratitude inspires their bosoms. . . . The dram-shop is exchanged for the house of God (35a).

O never, since the first temptation did Satan gain such a victory, as when he induced Christians to sanction everywhere the use of intoxicating liquor. And never, since the triumph of Calvary, has he experienced such a defeat as we are now summoned to accomplish (10, p. 12).

We have now come full circle. We see then that alcohol is denounced by the temperance adherents as a personified object embodying Satan. It *intrusively* usurps a position of tyranny over its victim. The erstwhile carrier of God is then "polluted;" the Lord takes offense at the evil spirit who now rules the individual; and He departs from the drinker in anger. Finally, the inebriate actualizes his Satanic qualities by sinfully raising his hand against the Lord and His sanctified social group.

The self-recovery group established by alcoholics also offers a crystallized set of beliefs and practices. Study of this interesting sub-culture may further emphasize the disparate nature of alcoholism as a disease entity as well as ecede additional clues as to the reasons for its dissimilitude.

We are initially impressed by the fact that, to our knowledge, *Alcoholics Anonymous* has been the first of the many self-help groups of the ill or afflicted that are now enjoying a mushrooming growth throughout the United States. Furthermore, A.A. traces its ancestry to the last century, e.g., the Washington Temperance Society originating in 1840, the Sons of Temperance, the Temple of Honor, etc. The ideology of the Washingtonian Movement is quite similar to that of the temperance movement — except for a greater humanitarian stress in its concern with the individual alcoholic. The crucial question arises as to whether the current organization retains, in the face of the present scientific atmosphere, residues of the former devoutness. And it is our contention — as it is indeed A.A.'s vaunt — that not only are there

remnants of this religious ardor, but that it keeps its significant primacy.

The institutionalized stages by which an alcoholic may rehabilitate himself are clearly outlined in the famous Twelve Steps of A.A. The first three are as follows:

Step One — We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

Step Two — Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Step Three — Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

The steps culminate in the well-known "twelfth step work" of A.A., i.e., the aid of alcoholics in distress:

Step Twelve — Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.

The reader may note the interesting juxtaposition of acknowledging that one is powerless before alcohol, that alcohol has made one's life unmanageable, and that there is a Power greater than oneself to whom one must turn over one's will and one's life in order to be restored to sanity. It would appear that for the alcoholic, alcohol and God are alternative and opposed authorities. One's choice is solely that of being ruled by one or by the other. Further, to regain "sanity", one must shift one's allegiance from alcohol to God. Consequently, religion is avowed by the alcoholic to be the one certain road to redemption. The alcoholic's self-rehabilitation movement as compared to those of other mentally diseased groups is unique in its contrasting emphasis upon sin, guilt, and atonement.

There are a number of concomitants of this religious stress by A.A. An A.A. meeting has the semblance of a public confessional where one repents (often in a somewhat bragging way of how low one has sunk) and is accepted back by God. The salvaged alcoholic defines himself as distinctive

and marked for life by his illness. For instance, the A.A. speaker invariably begins his talk, "Fellow Alcoholics," although he and many of the audience may well have been dry for over thirty years.

Corresponding to the alcoholic's self-defined divergence from the remainder of humanity, his association is characterized by its explicit and professedly contemptuous exclusion of the professional psychotherapist. In our society the latter is customarily allocated the role of gatekeeper to the legitimate role structure of the society for the mentally sick. Yet almost every A.A. meeting emits a blast against the psychotherapist. With some reality-justification the alcoholic feels that the therapist reciprocates his angry and depreciatory attitudes. One of the kindest statements about psychiatrists heard by the writer at an A.A. meeting was voiced by an obviously suicidal schizophrenic. He related that while his psychiatrist "cured" his emotional problems, his drinking difficulty remained unchanged: "The problem was that I was asking why. It wasn't enough for me to just know I was an alcoholic and to stay away from the first drink." A more representative approach is given by a title in *The A.A. Grapevine*: "A is for Aid — not Analysis." The writer sarcastically contends that the "cause and cure" of alcoholism can be left to the experts. A.A.'s job by contrast is "Immediate Treatment." The following judgment was found in the Ohio Penitentiary A.A.'s sheet, *Ohio Pen's Eye-O-Pen-Er* (this punning is common in A.A. culture and undoubtedly represents a substitutive oral gratification): "In my opinion, no one other than an A.A. member is really qualified to (give) constructive advice to other alcoholics."

There follows the observation that a virtuous man has no conception of an alcoholic's weaknesses:

He is not really qualified to understand our problem. The man to help us is the one who has had a real and varied contact with their fellows and with life — the man who has had a reasonable compound of virtue and vice — enough virtue to appreciate

excellence, and enough vice to appreciate naturalness. . . .

This execration of the therapist suggests — and we shall later pursue this point — that insight is allied to the forbidden fruit; the quest for self-understanding is equated with the temptation to engage anew in the hostile criticism of one's moral authorities.

And society — with perhaps the psychotherapist in the forefront — retaliates. The public swears that the alcoholic is evil and should be punished; that he could stop drinking if only he chose to do so. An alcoholic is unwelcome in the analyst's consultation room: the drinker gives one a "dirty" practice. A psychiatric authority insists that a "surrender phase" is a necessary condition for successful therapy with the alcoholic. Psychiatrists with relief refer the alcoholic to A.A.'s sole nurturance. It is indeed amazing, that in our present scientific climate, we leave to the vagaries of a religious conversion via an evangelical mission the treatment of some of the sickest and most self-scourging of our citizens, *viz.*, the Skid Row alcoholic.

We have now reviewed some of the singular attributes of alcoholism. Illustrations were readily extracted from the highly visible social organizations with their articulate ideologies that have arisen in reaction to problem drinking. This preliminary examination has permitted us to set the stage and to cue the reader for the following clinical portrayal of the alcoholic. We hope thereby to illuminate one facet of the unresolved question as to the particular nature of the sin committed by the alcoholic from which both the population at large and the alcoholic recoil with harsh reprobation.

#### THE DIABOLIST PLOT

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,  
Of noble enterprise;  
For if you do but taste his blood,  
'Twill make your courage rise.

"T will make a man forget his woe;

'T will heighten all his joy:  
'T will make the widow's heart to sing,  
Though the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn  
Each man a glass in hand:  
And may this great posterity  
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!

Robert Burns: John Barleycorn

The psychoanalytic literature is replete with references to the primarily primitive oral level of the alcoholic's psychological development. Unfortunately the *need* aspect of this point of development is stressed by most writers to the negligence of the corresponding cognitive attributes. Yet in the elaboration of the accompanying ideational content of the oral level we find indispensable guides for our investigation of the alcoholic's unconscious.

This experiential stage tends to be ruled by the primary process with its accompaniment of animistic thinking, i.e., the personification of inanimate forces and objects. Alcohol has a mysteriously puissant effect. It can alter permanently as well as temporarily man's psychic and bodily structure. For these reasons alcohol readily lends itself to personification — indeed, to deification in many ancient and primitive societies. In our culture, alcohol is familiarly referred to as "John Barleycorn," "demon rum," and "devil's water" as well as the more frequent term, "spirits." The latter is by the way an abbreviation of "*ardent* spirits." Wine boasts the nickname "Sneaky Pete." It is because of alcohol's awesome effect in contrast say, to grape juice, that it tends to be used in the communion service. It is because of its "aliveness" and "spiritedness" that the brotherhoods of former days who used to drink each other's blood to mark mutual belongingness and responsibility could easily substitute alcohol.

These prototypal thought levels are also characterized by a splitting of the representations of objects, e. g., the unified Parental Object may be fragmented into the Good Nurturant Parental Image and the Bad Depriving Parental

Image. In our treatment of the alcoholic we have been impressed by the frequency of paranoid trends. These traits frequently stemmed in part from the unconsciously imagined interactions of the self with dissociated images of persecutory significant authorities. The free use of projection as a defense compounds the confusion between self and non-self, thus giving impetus to the following ideational attribute: the oral incorporative stage has the potential cognitive property of regarding significant others as being within the organism (26). The representation of the other thereby obtains special advantage in the good it may render or the harm wreak upon the carrier. As alcohol obtains its potent effect when within, as it generates changes in one's emotions, will, intellect — in one's very awareness of body and self, as it seemingly governs the individual's behavior by channeling his action into paths alien to his sober self, alcohol's assimilation to the image of a dominant and internalized significant other is facilitated. (For example, the Simase, intoxicated by the drink arrack, announces that he is possessed by the "spirit.")

Finally, one fixated at an oral level of development tends dependently to seek a magic power which will assure him nurturance and protection. Where fixation at this early level of psychological growth is due to a deprivation trauma, the individual may repeat the traumatic situation by unwittingly selecting a magic power which will inevitably let him down. This theme also provides a matrix for homosexuality, another frequently listed latent attribute of the alcoholic.

Alcohol effectively slows down and even eliminates thought processes that can test and thereby become congruent with reality as well as follow the rules of logic. The primary processes, normally held in check by the problem drinker only with great difficulty, are thereby given complete sway. Self-aggrandizing fantasies may be readily activated. Further, as overt behavior is in a sense irreversible, the alcoholic during a drunk may instigate a confronting social reality that matches and reinforces his most primitive imaginations.

It is our thesis that the alcoholic imbibes liquor as symbolic of his pact with or possession by the Bad Father. As corollary, the alcoholic's drinking signifies the sucking in of the Bad Father's virile and powerful juices. In his unconscious thinking the alcoholic is thereby given strength empowering him to overthrow the Good Father and his galling restrictions. These restraints may be innate ones, e.g., an intellect inadequate to attain desired goals, or external ones, e.g., the legitimate but constraining expectations of significant others. Thus the parental surrogate is blamed for having damaged the individual so that he is rendered unfit to achieve the goods of this life; or the parent figure is held responsible for unfairly placing insurmountable obstacles in our aspirant's path. Alcoholics treated by the writer have bitterly blasphemed God for bestowing upon them a hateful body unresponsive to their wishes; they have denounced the Lord for conferring upon them an I.Q. less than that of Einstein; they have damned their conscience for undoing them; they have cursed society for not relinquishing all its valuables to them.

Alcohol is aptly known as the dissolvent of the conscience because it is this mental institution which acts as the internalized representation of the Moral and Good Father's enjoinder to renunciate, to inhibit, and to forbear. In this context we enumerate the attributes of the alcoholic as described in the literature; impulsive, irresponsible, egocentric, selfish, and incapable of subordinating himself to authority. He is depicted as being ridden with goals far beyond his ability to attain; as exploiting the slightest frustrations as pretext to spin into a binge where there is no longer disparity between what he would like to be and what he is. The alcoholic's tendency to act out assures that he will not obey God's decree to delay his pleasures until the life hereafter.

Repelled by his abhorrent selfhood and hating the Good Father whom he holds responsible for his degradation, the alcoholic appeals to the rival Bad Father for transcendence from his miserable lot. For the problem drinker is one who seeks immediate and extraordinary position, power, protec-

tion and pleasure; he wishes to have and to accomplish beyond the ability of ordinary mortals. To do this, he feels he must renounce the Lord and turn to Satan. The Tempter promises the painless actualization of one's regressive trends; he acts as a sugar-coated Nemesis encouraging the foregoing of reality-orientation in favor of unrestrained pleasure indulgence.

The separate personifications of a given external object made by one fixated upon this infantile level of dissociated perception do not only interact with a correspondingly sun-dered self-percept (38). Upon an emergent stage of the individual's fantasy these cleft images of a given other also communicate with each other (40). Thus, the alcoholic individual tends to regard the Good Father and the Bad Father as fiercely dueling for supremacy and not only inter-relating separately with oneself. There is existent a correlative theology which takes root from and gives root to, molds and is molded by the societal members' primitive thought processes. The perceived contest between the two divided and contrastive infantile images of father is thereby enabled transfer to the cosmic stage with its greater possibilities for dramatic development. The images of the Good Father and the Bad Father assume the grandiose masks of God and the Devil. This battle blossoms into a universal and eternal struggle. The individual, anxious to share in the omnipotence of these two figures, identifies himself as the center of their war. More, his weight can easily shift the balance. Thus the appalling sin of the alcoholic is that he has joined forces with the Devil in a conspiracy calculated to overthrow a restricting and belittling God and the society which He endorses. The alcoholic unconsciously considers himself to have succumbed to the Archfiend in order to actualize his insatiable craving for the goods of this life, e.g., a riotous pregenital affirmation of sex and the effective expression of rage.

Corresponding to the two chief ways in which it was thought that one might relate to the Archenemy when belief in demons and witches was still active in Western society, in the unconscious of the alcoholic the relationship to the

Devil is arranged by a pact or by possession. A pact is a voluntary contract with the Devil in which the Evil One promises to realize the individual's earthly ambitions for a stated period of time in return for everlasting servitude to his Infernal Majesty. (The well-known toasting virtues of alcohol have resulted in its being the matrix of many a bargain). The problem drinker condenses into a time-limited binge the erstwhile contract with the Devil — a lifetime of extraordinary happiness in exchange for an eternity of hell. During the alcoholic state one fantasies that one has what God, the arbitrator of the normal state of affairs, dared to refuse to grant. (As will be stressed later, however, the alcoholic, like the downtrodden medieval serf fancifully emboldened to be king for a few hours at a Black Mass ceremony, sneaks back muling and puking to his slavery with the first glimmer of dawn.)

Possession is the usurpation by the Devil of an individual's consciousness and the control of his behavior from an interior vantage point. Possession is generally permitted by the individual's unwitting carelessness, although sometimes the Devil threatens and bullies his way in. It is interesting for our purposes that in its broader usage, possession refers to any mastery of the will of one individual by another and supernatural personality. Thus in the Old Testament the same term is utilized for divine inspiration as for control by an evil agency. The superhuman spirit entered the individual, taking possession of him, and revealing this control to the outsider. We may now better understand the dichotomy between alcohol and religious devotion proposed by the temperance movement, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and various primitive groups. Not only was the drinker willingly inviting entrance by the evil spirit, he was also chasing forth the holy being that inhabited him. The two opposed personages could not dwell in the same host.

Once the Devil dwells within, he cajoles the individual into acting in an utterly devilish manner; one completely opposed to the individual's normal behavior. Oesterreich (34, p. 21) reports that ". . . the words uttered by the

strange voice generally betray a coarse and filthy attitude, fundamentally opposed to all accepted ethical and religious ideas." He then quotes Kerner who described a true hearted maid who in a fit utters "curses upon the Holy Scriptures, the Redeemer, and all the saints." Generalizing, Kerner continues:

... that all that these demons say by the mouth of such a man is entirely diabolic in nature and completely opposed to the character of the person possessed. It consists in mockeries and curses against all that is sacred, against God and our Savior, and particularly in mockeries and curses directed against the persons whom they possess, whom they outrage by their own mouth and beat with their own fists.

The following description from Kerner (*ibid.*, p. 40) corresponds to the alcoholic's own portrayal of his behavior when drunk and the experience accompanying it:

Some of these patients, when the demon manifests himself and begins to speak in them, close their eyes and lose consciousness as in a magnetic sleep, the demon then often speaks through their mouths without their knowing it. With others, the eyes remain open and the consciousness lucid, but the patient cannot resist even with his full strength of mind, the voice which speaks in him; he hears it express itself like a quite other and strange individuality lodged within him and outside his control.

Similar expressions may be elicited from the alcoholic on close inquiry into the feelings about his "blackout" period, and on repeated requests for associations to his oft-heard puzzled remarks: "I don't know what got into me to do a thing like that," "It was like I was someone else", "It was like power and courage were flowing into me — even though it was this 'false courage' you know about," or more remorsefully, "I'd never do anything like that — it

was like there was someone else in me making me do it."

The alcoholic may on different levels simultaneously regard himself as having made a willing contract with the Devil and as being involuntarily possessed by the Devil. Either thought may act as a defense against the other one. The belief in being possessed by an internal demon who determines one's behavior is a leftover from the earliest stage of growth, wherein the infant, still not clear as to the boundaries of his physical organism, regards the bad depriving parent as being within him and causing his hunger pangs, intestinal cramps, etc. The conviction that one has made a willing pact serves to deny that one is the prostrate victim of a dominant and internal force. The idea that one is being possessed may then be relied upon in order to complete a three-layered defensive structure. At this most surface level, imagining oneself as being possessed functions as a denial of having *willingly* concluded a pact with the Devil to undermine God. At different stages of the relationship to the Devil the individual's surmise as to whether a pact was made or a possession performed may change. The individual who dares sign a brazen contract with the Devil only to sink eventually into abject and eternal subjection in hell may well wonder what overcame him to arrive at such terms with the Devil. The alcoholic frequently acts out the same sequence in each binge, as well as over a longer span of time. For seemingly he first chooses to drink, only to find himself seized firmly in the grip of a torturous drunk or of a dread disease. The succession may, however, go in the opposite direction: one who feels that he is possessed may then imagine he has made a pact with the Father of Evil. This progression occurs when there accrue extensive secondary gratifications to being possessed.

There are varying degrees of self-awareness and other-awareness and differing modes of interaction of the foci of self-percepts and other-percepts in the alcoholic's distorted fantasies (39, 40). As just indicated, the changing states of consciousness find analogy in the experience by demoniacs of being possessed during the Middle Ages. These expe-

riences vary for different alcoholics and at given stages of their illness. The sequence is frequently as follows: At first, one may be aware of oneself as a helpless and inadequate subject of an enslaving Lord appealing to the Arch-enemy to free one from one's shackles. One sucks in the Devil's potency via alcohol. In the fantasies of other alcoholics the Father of Evil helps one to rob the Good Father's masculinity. Here one drinks the "nectar" stolen from God. With one's insidiously appropriated power, one now vanquishes an emasculated Lord. In the Black Mass ceremony of Satanists, the sacred host in which the body of Christ was seemingly incarcerated, was eagerly devoured after being vilely abused. Then self-awareness is lost.

One becomes the other, i.e., the other-concept is the single active foci of consciousness. A stuporous elation accompanies the initial identification with the Bad Father and the denial of one's inadequacy. One is as drunk as a lord. One is oneself Satan boldly actualizing his hellborn ends. As the Devil, one is endowed with nearly complete omniscience and omnipotence. One fantasies that one manipulates and even destroys a frustrating world. The drinker is concerned only with his own pleasure. He freely brings hell on his close ones; all obligations are ignored. (The writer recalls an alcoholic plumber who had studied two years for the priesthood. He had eight children ranging from seven months up to twelve years. The impoverished family had planned a birthday party for him. On the way home from his now occasional work, he stopped at the tavern. The family ate the birthday cake without him. The next morning while he was still in a drunken stupor, the children before going off to school filed into his room, bewildered and dumb, to give him his presents.) The individual may have no conscious recollection of this stage wherein the other-concept alone administers consciousness. For example, there was the patient who would run down to his car the morning after to check whether it was covered with the blood of a victim he might have hit during his blackout.

Dante in his *Vision of Hell* graphically portrays the

masochistic aspect of this essay at omnipotence via identification with the Devil. The Spirit of Evil is envisioned as a serpent with six feet which seizes upon a man and so closely intertwines himself with his victim that the two become indistinguishable. "Each melted into the other mingling hues, that each . . . was seen no more." As elaborated below, with the alcoholic this stage generally follows the narcissistic fulfillment of his inflated illusions by the aping of Satan.

For other individuals, usually those with relatively stronger egos, the pattern of the possession always remains somewhat similar to the dual personality structure wherein all the foci of consciousness have some degree of selfhood. This individual is somewhat aware that his most outrageous acts have some connection with his hidden fantasies.

#### THE AFTERMATH

O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil! O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! That we should, with joy, pleasance, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts! To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast. O strange! Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient is a devil.

Wm. Shakespeare: *Othello* II, iii.

At a later point in a given binge or at a later stage of the alcoholic illness, the self-percept may make a clearer entry, again as the lowly self being controlled by an internal and hostile demon. Here both self- and other-concept are simultaneously energized. The individual bewails his lack of will-power to overcome the craving that periodically or chronically pushes him into a tavern and forces him to gulp down liquor long after he knows he has had enough. Due to the eventually self-defeating quality of an excessive intake of alcohol, the Devil at this point frequently takes on the role of the castrating castrate. The Devil is depicted as one who limps,

an injury he suffered when God flung him out of heaven for daring to sit on God's throne. (And is this attempt at usurpation not the alcoholic's sin too?) In addition to suffering this symbol of castration the Devil of medieval folklore constantly finds himself forfeiting his power by virtue of being caught in vagina symbols such as a bag or a bottle (12). The secret salutation of Satanist groups was: "The Injured One give you greeting (32)."

The Devil would emasculate in vengeance for his own impotence. The act of possession itself, during which the Devil makes entry through one of the bodily orifices, has obvious sexual connotations. A Papal Bull issued during the Middle Ages held demons and witches responsible for impotency, frigidity, and sterility, i.e., for the inability to assume properly one's sexual role. Innocent VIII in 1484 authenticated that those who have abandoned themselves to the devil "hinder men from performing the sexual act and women from conceiving, whence husbands cannot know their wives nor wives receive their husbands." The Devil is described as envying mankind. Some folklore (e.g. the writings of St. Bernard) has it that Satan and his cohorts are furious with man because God put man on this earth to recruit replacements for the heavenly seats surrendered by the rebellious angels. Another myth (e.g., Cyprian) claims that it was Satan's hatred of man that originally led to this archangel's downfall.

The identification with this aspect of Satan was apparent in the following case. A young incipient alcoholic, regarding his overt homosexuality as a sign of his depreciated status, recalled the feeling of great triumph when a priest who had ridiculed him was revealed to be a homosexual. A constant dream motif was the seduction with ensuing humiliation of envied "straight" friends. Reparation was made in part by the patient's compulsive self-revelation and by his own impotence. In this context we may note the mockery and exclusion by alcoholics of any of their buddies who get on the wagon.

The homosexual-castration theme was all too obvious in

a rather gruesome 1953 *A. A. Grapevine* article. Its author reported that on a Sunday in a strange city his tooth ached. After vainly trying to assuage the pain with alcohol, he had a dentist called to his hotel room. The dentist enjoyed a drink with him. When our hero woke up he found the dentist snoring beside him. His jaw ached. The denouement: he finds to his horror eleven of his good teeth on the bureau!

The alcoholic is like the youth who accompanies a man to bed in order to learn to emulate the sexual ways of a male and to incorporate the man's strength. Bewildered, he discovers that his relationship has left him bereft of his manhood and permanently stained with effeminacy by another man's semen. Only the alcoholic is worse off: his emasculator is within, originating his self-lacerating behavior and neutralizing any opposition from an enfeebled will. When, in a delirium the alcoholic succeeds temporarily in expelling the internal demon, it then takes the form of hallucinated animals with phallic import desirous of making an anal attack. The panicky individual dreads an accompanying castration.

The Devil in this devitalizing role may also represent the hostile, gelding mother. The pre-genital stage of the alcoholic makes tenuous any distinction between mother and father; the images of mother and father, even if sometimes separate, are freely recombined. In medieval portraits the Devil is often drawn with long hanging dugs. F. Rops, a modern illustrator, often garbs the Devil in woman's dress. The Indian God HariHara, combination of Siva and Vishna, is depicted as half male and half female. The Devil was reputed to be capable of taking the form of a succubus, i.e., of a woman who would drain a man of his sexuality while he slept. As part of the Devil's contract, he was permitted to suck blood from his servant. The American Indian's Devil killed his young male sacrificial victims by sucking their blood. In this role the Devil clearly plays the depriving phallic mother upon whom the frustrated infant projects his aggressive wish to suck out her bodily contents. Correspondingly, the alcoholic is enabled to act out his problems re the

Bad Mother whose poisonous milk causes him intense impairment and suffering.

On this pregenital level of clouded and diffuse primary process thought, with its *dramatis personae* subject to sudden condensations, fractionizations, and liquidations, the following adjunctive theme was evinced. It appeared in a number of alcoholic patients who maintained to some degree the apartness of father-image and mother-image: The disabled male may wish to join with the father in order to withstand the shattering onslaught of the termagant mother. More drastically, experiencing himself as effeminated by the damaging care of the mother, the patient desires intercourse with the father as a way of repairing his masculinity. The individual strives for entrance into the man's world, but he needs magical help from a powerful male surrogate to do so. In fear of the emasculation implied in being the subject of a homosexual act, the individual in his fantasy renders the now Bad Father effeminate as one fears the Bad Father would do to oneself. (For example, one alcoholic patient, as his pride-undermining homosexual inclinations erupted into consciousness, accused the author of being a pimp for a homosexual group and of using the therapy situation as a shield to seduce the patient into the position of a male prostitute. A diabolist myth illustrative of the castration attendant upon a homosexual act with the Bad Father is provided by the medieval paintings of the Devil in which the tail is embellished with serpent's jaw, or where the buttocks and breasts are covered by fiercely grinning visages.) The internalized father-image, i.e., the conscience, then rebukes one both for this attack upon him as well as for one's regressive trends. Guilt of course is the accompaniment of this schema.

At this point of degraded self helplessly subjugated to a leering and an emasculating other,—whether this other be male, female, or an androgynous coalescence of the two, another significant authority re-enters the stage: the all-conquering God. The Supreme Being now boldly and scornfully crushes the head of the Old Serpent. One finds oneself a

lamentable and loathsome scion of the defeated and woeful Evil Spirit. Consequently, nothing is so intense as the remorse of one who is hung over.

Exposition of the diabolist theme as the seductive fantasy luring the individual into inebriety suggests one added factor in the low alcoholism rate of the Jews. This modest rate is all the more remarkable in view of the generous contributions the Jews made to other mental disorder statistics. The Hebrews succeeded in integrating, or better perhaps, re-integrating, the many existent demi-gods and divinities into a single image of God. Satan, possibly even then hankering for an independent kingdom where he would be sole sovereign, continues bridled throughout the Old Testament. Though occasionally succeeding in dragging man into disfavor before God, this angel still dwells strictly under God's reign. Using the New Testament as his springboard, Satan finally rebelled. And "this world" witnessed the birth of a new demoniacal Prince, his Satanic Majesty.

Satan stole with him a few of the Hebraic Lord's virtues, but more of His vices: brutality, vengefulness, and malevolence. The refurbished God therefore could afford to emerge gentle and merciful. Gone were the adjudging, censoring, and punitory excesses. However, the new religion paid a severe toll for purifying its God and incarnating His erstwhile negative attributes in a separate personage. The Christian was enabled to perform the customary when there are a number of distinct authorities: he could play off one against the other. He could manipulate and cajole the powers into outbidding each other for his favor. Via alliance with one of the battling authorities he had a ready made path by which to channel his hatred and disdain of the other.

The Jew inhibited his reputed bargaining prowess by maintaining only a single God with Whom to deal. No tempting alternative deities beckoned to those dissatisfied with God's apportionment. Consequently, there were no substances of which the Jew could grasp hold to whisk him outside the dominion of the Almighty. For the orthodox Jew, alcohol tends to remain a gift from God. It is to be

used to eliminate that hostile self-centeredness which prevents one from integrating solidary relations with God's creatures as well as with God Himself. It is to be used to make, seal, and consecrate a communal contract with Yahweh. But never to caricature, repudiate, or replace Him.

### SURRENDER AND RECONCILIATION

Awake, ye drunkards, and weep.  
Joel 1:5

We left our alcoholic in the state described so well by Robert Burns who reported that he was "amid the horrors of penitence, regret, remorse, headache, nausea, and all the rest of the d---d hounds of hell that beset a poor wretch who has been guilty of the sin of drunkenness." This same author who gaily wrote, "John Barleycorn was a hero bold/ Of noble enterprise" was to warn later, "There's death in the cup — sae beware! /Nay, more—there is danger in touching." And again, from his own experience:

See Social Life and Glee set down,  
All joyous and unthinking,  
Till, quite transmogrified, they're grown  
Debauchery and Drinking.

Family deprived, residence forfeited, position lost, bereft of esteem and affection, physically and mentally sick if not deteriorated, it is no surprise then that the alcoholic is willing to shift his allegiance by becoming the servant, even if a degraded one, of the victorious Good Father. Thus the alcoholic's self-belittling, "Fellow Aleoholics," and his ritualistic and humiliating repetition of long past errors as he addresses an A.A. audience. As a result of his warped development, the alcoholic perceives the Good Father as accepting him only upon his willing confirmation of his permanently inferior status.

We may now understand his ecstatic preoccupation with the supposedly new-found Lord who now guides his way. If presently he is possessed at all, he would believe it is by

a cleansing and good Spirit. A.A. thus models its behavior on the Roman and Gallican usage of succeeding the exorcism of a demon by replacement with the Holy Spirit. And the *A.A. Grapevine* articles accordingly speak of "a new (this author's italics) power flowing in as I obey God."

As with most individuals who intensely deprecate themselves, there is also manifest a certain streak of compensating narcissism. "Fellow Alcoholics" somehow strikes a boastful note. The alcoholic evidently emulates the belief of Father Surin, the one honest if rather naive priest who partook in the Loudon Devils farce. He humbly offered that his own possession by the devil, which incidentally he sought, was part of God's purgative process that must precede illumination: "It is one of God's more ordinary leadings in the ways of Grace to permit the devil to possess or obsess souls which he wishes to raise to a high degree of holiness." By his humiliatory possession, the problem drinker's sin has been expiated. The way has been prepared for reconciliation with the Lord. The A.A. member enjoys the role of the prodigal son, all the more noticed and loved by virtue of his past transgressions.

It may be seen more clearly why alcoholics set themselves off as a group forever placed apart from the rest of the population. The Devil's mark is like a permanent tattoo for those sitting desperately upon these explosive fantasies rather than chancing having them rooted out. Insight is fearfully regarded as a diabolical, God-supplanting essay at omniscience. The psychotherapist therefore is labelled a harmless egghead to cloak the frightening perception of the devilish necromancer. Little wonder that the alcoholic has successfully wrested from the professional healer so many varieties of milieu therapy (i.e., acting out in either a socially neutral or less detrimental manner).

The diabolist myth explains why society, though finally willing to hospitalize and provide treatment for the psychotic, still subjects the inebriate to futile jail terms and ludicrous admonishment. Additional light is thrown upon the moral indignation aroused by resonance in lay groups who direct

religiously-oriented movements against alcoholism in a fashion singular for any mental illness. For the uncontrolled imbiber of alcohol is attesting defiantly, if unconsciously and ineffectively, to his being the Devil's agent designing the destruction of established society in order to fulfill his inordinately self-seeking wishes.

Let us now turn briefly to the theoretical implications of this diabolist fantasy for the structuring of the psychopath's superego. Alcoholism is listed frequently, of course, as a subheading of the psychopathic personality in many classificatory schemes. It is our impression that the organization of conscience that we present here as characteristic of the psychopath, including the alcoholic psychopath, also holds, though to a lesser extent, for essentially neurotic types of problem drinkers. Reference is made to those neurotic alcoholics who make a basically Dionysian appeal to alcohol.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF THE SUPEREGO IN THE PSYCHOPATHIC PERSONALITY

His (the Satanist's) ABC and first article is to deny God, the creator of all things, to blaspheme the most holy and individuated Trinity, to trample underfoot all the mysteries of the Redemption, to spit in the face of the Mother of God and all the Saints. The second is, to abhor the name of Christian, to renounce the chrism, the baptism, the approbation of the Church, and the Sacraments. Thirdly, to sacrifice to the Devil, to make a covenant with him to adore him, to render faithful homage to him, to commit adultery with him, to give up to him innocent children, and to recognize him as his benefactor.

From a medieval French pamphlet describing the Satanic covenant. Quoted in (16, p. 65).

A major psychological controversy continues about the nature of the psychopath's superego. Most writers (e. g.,

37, 15, 23) maintain the psychopath lacks a conscience. Their opponents (e. g., 4, 36, 42) contend that the psychopath not only has a superego, but is in some ways beset by a much more ferocious and virulent one than the normal individual. A third group (e. g., 32a, 43) though sometimes joined by authors who simply present a confused discussion with their contradictory assumptions remaining inexplicit, declares that the psychopath has a malformed and therefore weak superego. Allied to the third group would be those writers (e. g., 6, 20, 22, 24) who use "psychopath" to denote a departure from the average, and therefore divide psychopathy into sub-headings that correspond to the neuroses and psychoses.

We suggest that the diabolist fantasy delineated above offers a possibility of resolution of this difficulty. At the very least, the devil myth provides the paradigm for one structural variant of psychopathic conscience.

First, two initial points: "Criminal" and "Satanist" were equivalent terms in the Middle Ages. As God was considered to have sanctioned all the customs and mores of medieval society, any deviancy from the approved ways immediately located the individual in the Devil's camp. And secondly, we repeat that many authors (e. g., 4, 23) affirm that the psychopath is fixated on an oral level of development. Thus the psychopath is subject to those same distorted ways of experiencing the world listed above as characteristic of the alcoholic.

M. Klein (27) argues that the dismembered and dissociated images of the parent-surrogates from the earliest stages of psychological development constitute the original conscience nuclei. It was our experience that the alcoholic psychopath never quite reaches the level of development where the cleft images of moral authority are integrated, and certainly never that point where the individual may predominantly act according to principles abstracted and somewhat emergent from these figures.

The alcoholic at particular levels of his personality also uses every device to deprive the authority-images of any

right to judge and to censure. Guilt is here defined as that emotion which follows on the perceived rebuke by an internalized image of an authority-figure for one's moral transgressions. This authority-image is frequently projected by the alcoholic upon an external object so that the more surface layers of the personality manifest anxiety rather than guilt. But this does not mean that a superego is lacking.

Generalizing from the alcoholic psychopath, it may be hypothesized that the psychopathic conscience retains the disjunction into two major sections. One part is symbolized by the Bad Father urging, seducing, bullying and/or menacing a cowed yet aspiring individual into degrading performance of nefarious deeds. The second part is represented by the forbidding and oppressive Moral Father who resolutely insists upon complete retribution before being reconciled to his rebellious subject.

This view finds some support in the few attempts to delineate the family constellation of the psychopath (Of course, the "constitutionists" employ as a major criteria for the psychopathic personality classification the lack of any pathological bestowment from the early family situation.) Spitz (42a) instances one psychopathy-inducing maternal personality who made identification impossible by her contradictory and inconsistent affects which varied with great rapidity. Szurek (43) concluded that psychopathic behavior results from a particular tendency having met with unconscious and therefore guilty permissiveness by the disciplinarian or with inadequate reward for inhibition. Greenacre (19) locates the inconsistency in the contrasting behavior of the two parents. It may be deduced that propulsion is given by the parent-figure's behavior to the anti-social child's tendency to splinter the image of an object, and particularly, those images which represent the superego.

It is now standard to view depraved and depraving anti-social behavior as being id originated, ego connived, and superego circumventing. Yet this approach lacks for explanations of that proud exultation characteristic of some of our teenagers after being caught for some senseless, ghast-

ly slaying, and, less drastically, of the self-righteous defiance our alcoholic patients displayed as they triggered off a drunk. This view fails to account for the so-called "criminal code." We would suggest that this code represents in essence the Bad Father's *moral* injunction upon the criminal to uphold both the Bad Father and one's Bad Sibs. That Satanists worshipped the Devil in an infamous *religious* ceremony and that the highest praise at the Black Mass was given to that witch who claimed the most destructive deeds provide the clearest evidence for the superego's (i.e., internalized authority-figure(s) who judges one on moral criteria) active conspiracy in the perpetration of an odious act.

We would postulate that, given the similar cast of characters on their internal stage, the divergencies among psychopathic personalities may be accounted for by the differences in their dominant definitions of the interrelations between God, Devil, sibs, and self. The general themes that we have depicted among alcoholics are the identification with the hurt, inept Bad Father and/or being his unhappy slave. The alcoholic psychopath, by virtue of his very choice of alcohol, has as integral part of his fantasy his own humiliating defeat. There is little alternative with a steady diet of liquor. From the problem drinkers we have seen in the therapy situation and from our study of A.A. we have postulated that the internal script usually ends happily with a self-effacing submission to the Good Father. However, A.A. members and alcoholics seeking and remaining in therapy are a selected sample. A cheerful conclusion seemingly is not a prominent aspect of the governing schemata of those permanent Skid Row habitues who exist and die as gruesomely as one can imagine. A slight departure on these themes was lived out by one young Skid Row alcoholic. He hoped that by his degradation, viz., hunger, dirt, ragged clothes, fantasies of being beaten, and of eating the Good Father's faeces, the Good Father would take pity and award him a penis, or at the very least, protection. He hoped to steal a powerful man's virility to have as his own — only he felt too weak even to be a successful thief. Because of this reason he was

unable to join those self-reliant and fearless gang leaders, i. e., the Bad Fathers, whom he felt really controlled the society.

Very different kinds of psychopaths are extant, however. There are those who would not be deceived by alcohol; those who would not trip into self-created pitfalls. For instance, the "Mr. Big" of the rackets may be cited. Though we have no empirical evidence on this psychopathic type, we would hypothesize that this individual, in the plot of his hidden drama, has victoriously identified with the proud and independent Bad Father; he has triumphed in the theft of the Good Father's power. The now debilitated God can be discarded; this psychopath is his own god.

Another psychopathic variant of this drama has paramount significance for the social order as well as for the alcohol problem. We refer to those individuals who hate God with a fury for supposedly obstructing and confining them. They too are consequently tempted by the Devil to realize their overweening ambitions and perverse lusts. Frightened by their own attraction to the Devil, they immediately resort to a defensive identification with their wrathful God and a projection of the devil-captivation upon others. Accompanying these protective dynamisms is a reaction formation against their infernal impulses — which in turn feeds the barbarous persecution of the projection targets. In their ruthless hunt after witches — without feeling, without justice, and without marksmanship — the repressed diabolical hatred and craze for power are allowed full sway. One may in part thereby explain the simmering down of the temperance movement: still more dread yet intriguing devil-worshippers occupy the political arena today. Incidentally, the moral indignation manifest by the rabid witch finder reiterates that a section of the superego, i. e., that represented by the Bad Father, makes vital contribution to criminal activity. And it allows us to better comprehend why the Adorno study (1) resorted to jailed criminals to sample the extremes of the authoritarian personality.

This last psychopathic grouping yields the clue as to

why those hysterically zealous scolds and evangelical prigs who largely headed the temperance movement understood so well the secret springs of alcoholism. It was to their own unconscious motivation that they were responding. By suppression of devilism in others, they hoped to conquer their own devilism.

John Calvin put it much more mildly when he wrote, "If anyone vow abstinence from wine as if there were any holiness in such abstinence he is corrigible with superstition." The social psychologist, Munsterberg (31) reacted a little more vigorously:

. . . this superficiality (of the temperance movement) is the more repellent because every glimpse below the surface shows an abundance of cant and hypocrisy and search for cheap fame and sensationalism, and still more selfish motives mingled with the whole movement; even the agitation itself, with its threats of ruin, borders too often on graft and blackmail and thus helps to debauch the public life.

If we are correct in assuming that a major group of temperance leaders are patterned after this personality type, it is little wonder that, as Jellinek (1a, p. 280) reports, they opposed the Yale Plan Clinics for rehabilitation of alcoholics; and that in the city where this author has had first-hand experience, some of their leaders vociferously resist a community-supported institution for the scientific treatment of Skid Row alcoholics. The misery of another individual counts for little when one's social activity is dictated by a desperate internal struggle.

We confess to a great deal of sympathy for any social movement by an unselfish and competent group of citizens — and there were obviously many in the temperance movement — who cry out against the brutalization, the stupefaction, and the disintegration of fellow citizens, and against those advantaged individuals who commercially fatten on and therefore further instigate others' suffering. Yet the

question rises as to why the temperance group — so heavily overlapping in its membership anti-vivisection, vegetarian and analogous sects — so little attends to the basic social forces that pervert a man into seeking his own or his brother's perdition. It is our impression that this inattention is derived from a rigid reaction formation against their own wishes to mutiny; and that in their unconscious, demands for basic reform of the social structure border too closely on a desecrating revolt against the Good Father.

#### SUMMARY

The distinctive aspects of alcoholism as compared with other mental illnesses were pointed out: its continued tie with morality, religion, and a politics of the "crusading" variety. To account for this peculiarity of alcoholism we presented a dominant, underlying fantasy of many problem drinkers which seizes upon alcohol for its actualization. The paper concluded with some suggestions of this fantasy for the nature of the superego organization in the psychopathic personality — and in addition, for the psychology of the temperance movement.

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# Aesthetic Symbolism

by

Robert N. Wilson

"Thus individual and society, in a never ending interplay of symbolic gestures, build up the pyramided structure called civilization. In this structure very few bricks touch the ground."

—Edward Sapir

Systems of aesthetic symbols, those found in literature, music, or painting, are an important facet of culture. Although anthropologists have warned the layman that such symbols are not to be equated with culture, that culture involves a great range of activities and artifacts of every variety, from a symphony to a swaddling cloth, we should emphasize that the concept of culture does not *exclude* the arts. When Kroeber (1) set out to study the patterning of culture growth, he took as part of his data the record of aesthetic patterns, feeling that these were in the nature of test cases for his exploration of configurations in human activity. He focused on the arts as patterns, deliberately putting aside questions of genius and individual personality dynamics. It seems there could be few better demonstrations of the peculiar importance of aesthetic symbols to social scientific theory than the fact of the dean of American anthropologists having selected them for analysis. His selection is illuminating for two reasons. First, he desired to study relatively clear-cut cultural phenomena which could be reasonably viewed apart from individual agents or particular concatenations of historical events; aesthetic patterns possess a certain autonomy which met this requirement, and which is vital to a comprehension of their position as socially

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1. Kroeber, A. L.: *Configurations of Culture Growth* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1944)

valued entities. It is not reification to attribute a measure of independence to patterns of this type, as the work of Kroeber and L. L. Whyte (2) bears witness. Secondly, Kroeber made his choice partly because the arts were on record, were available for analysis. The idea that "art is long, . . ." is not new, but it is significant that a serious scholar finds art forms most readily available for long-range scientific research. How non-accidental it is that Horace should have been correct in writing "Unto Myself I Reared a Monument . . ."! For art does last, aesthetic products are prized; and this appears to be true of the great majority of human groups. These symbols may be seen, in company with philosophy, religion, and the sciences, as perdurable precipitates of the societies of men. In the broadest sense, then, we may observe at least three major characteristics of aesthetic forms:

1. Art endures: it is highly valued.
2. Art possesses a measure of autonomy, a transcendence of particular persons, places, events: it may be analyzed as an independent system of symbols.
3. Art is patterned: Kroeber demonstrates conclusively that the arts flourish in clusters, that the forms of art must be viewed as limiting and sustaining individual genius, and that there is a decided tendency to pattern fulfillment. This tendency toward fulfillment means that systems of aesthetic symbols may be said to become "rationalized" or coherently extended much as systems of law or science are.

Our focus is on literary symbolism, although it is probable that many statements about literature are applicable to a wide variety of aesthetic patterns. Literary symbols constitute a special case of what Parsons has termed "expressive symbolism;" (3) they are among the most complex

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2. Whyte, L. L.: **The Next Development in Man** (Mentor Books: 1950) devices of human communication. Expressive symbolism is

pervasive in social interaction, at the core of the consensual element underlying common values. It is an integral part of human life, yet one of the least well understood phenomena in society. Aesthetic symbols, like all others in the expressive realm, have firm roots in the basic interactive process of face-to-face communion. Poetry is a striking example of the genesis of aesthetic forms in social intercourse and their development into highly specialized patterns embracing a written tradition. Most observers believe the origin of poetry to lie in face-to-face recitals of events, often related to song and rhythm. This early poetry, crystallized in the ballad form, is usually conceded to have been a communal thing, thoroughly accepted by, if not in fact originated by, a collectivity. Read (4) follows Francis Gummere in emphasizing

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3. Expressive symbolism constitutes the system "through which expressive action is oriented to the situation." Expressive action is a type of action, parallel to instrumental action. In this mode, "the interest in immediate gratification is primary and neither instrumental nor evaluative considerations have primacy." (cf. Parsons, Talcott: *The Social System*, Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press: 1951 Ch. IX, p. 548)

Professor Parsons' stress on immediacy is crucial, because it illuminates the distinction between symbolism which is directed to some purpose *outside itself* and symbolism "for its own sake" which is possessed of intrinsic value. Expressive symbols are assuredly not instrumental, unless we broaden the instrumental category greatly. For although, as Langer insists, "presentational" symbols may perform an orienting function, this orientation is of a global nature, cued not to specific objectives but to full realization of experience. The distinction of expressive action from evaluative types is not so clear. Expressive symbols are inherently evaluative in one sense because they record the selective response of an individual to life situations, and selection implies choice. Perhaps the best formulation is to define "evaluative" for the theory of action in such terms that it requires *extrinsic* judgment according to norms, whereas "expressive" requires *intrinsic* judgment according to the adequacy of experiential representation. The category of "evaluative" action would then enter expressive (here, aesthetic) symbolism only in the performance of a critical estimation by an aesthetic specialist.

ing that the ballads were marked by simplicity and rhythmic quality, permitting an appeal to the whole social group. Gummere called "the cadence of consenting feet" the first cause of poetry, and we know that before the elaboration of written symbols poetry must necessarily have consisted of direct communication. These views of the social origin and group impact of ballads illustrate the fundamentally interpersonal quality of poetry. Although it may at times, in sophisticated societies, reach the position of an esoteric and tremendously specialized activity, poetry is basically social: one phase of expressive symbolism, and a vital phase.

We recognize that literary patterns are characteristic modes of expression in society. There are theorists who would place the arts as "luxury" elements, beautiful but non-utilitarian. But why, we might ask, should these "unimportant" symbolic modes have endured as valued by many persons, and have originated as truly social products? Suzanne Langer (5) posits a "need to symbolize" in human behavior. Men engage in symbolic activity in answer to an essential desire for communication and elucidation of experience. Langer makes an important distinction between two types of symbolism, which she calls "discursive" and "presentational." The discursive mode needs no special discussion, since it is familiar as the prototype of logical, cognitive pointing with explicit reference to known entities. It explains or abstracts from experience for certain definite purposes and has an end-in-view beyond itself: communication here serves as an instrument for something else.

But the presentational mode (in art) is more difficult to indicate. This is because it does not serve an obvious end, does not facilitate pragmatic activity. (6) Rather, it conveys a global structuring of experience such that communication is immediate, communication "for its own sake." Asthetic symbolism is an instance of presentational symbol-

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4. Read, Herbert: **Phases of English Poetry** (Norfolk: New Directions 1951)

5. Langer, Suzanne: **Philosophy in a New Key** (Mentor Books: 1948)

ism. Langer builds her new key for philosophy around the recognition that presentational symbols are vital to an understanding of men in culture. She illustrates with point and richness the possibilities for investigation inherent in the idea that presentational symbolism is on a par with discursive symbolism in its importance for the analysis of behavior. Her thesis is a primary portent of the growing interest in aesthetic experience in the modern West, the feeling that somehow our scientific "cognitive mapping" falls short of adequate knowledge about men as social beings.

If aesthetic symbol making and experiencing is a need of individuals, and a socially valued activity, what may be its further significance in social interaction? Several authors have suggested that art may be for the appreciator a way of viewing the world. Art forms may structure experience and enhance belief. Parsons distinguishes expressive symbol systems from "belief systems," proposing that such belief systems as philosophy, ideology, religion, and science impose a greater degree of "acceptance" on the individual. One can take or leave aesthetic products, and one feels no compulsion to take them—or, if taking them, to act upon them. This position would be upheld by many purists in aesthetic philosophy and criticism. Yet there is evidence for attributing to art a certain power in forming a world view, at least for some persons. Langer and her philosophical ancestor, Ernst Cassirer, would stress the cognitive element in myth. Jung in his theory of archetypes seems to affirm that, since the symbols of great art are precipitates of the deepest experience of the race, our resonance for them is not fortuitous. They recall to us, so to speak, particularly significant ways of viewing the world, ancient ideals,

6. *Ibid.*, p. 214: "Art . . . has no consequences; it gives form to something that is simply there, as the intuitive organizing functions of sense give form to objects and spaces, color and sound."

"To understand the 'idea' in a work of art is therefore more like having a new experience than like entertaining a new proposition; . . ."

7. Bodkin, Maud: *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (Oxford: 1934)

conflicts, resolutions. Maud Bodkin (7) attests that for her poetry is religious experience, that this aesthetic pattern means to her what she assumes is the essential character of religion. She affirms Santayana's conclusion that poetry is "religion without points of application in conduct, and without an expression in worship and dogma," and that "our religion is the poetry in which we believe."

If poetry as symbolism has a single, central function in society over the long centuries, that function is surely the formation of language. The creators of aesthetic patterns in literary form are generically language-makers, involved in the effort to express experience in the most completely adequate manner. Since experience is various, and there are probably as many idiosyncratic perceptions of life as there are perceivers, it is obvious that poets as professional perceivers should be intimately concerned with the use of language. The effort of an individual to "say what he means" aesthetically, or better to recreate for himself and others his essential experience, is a prime source of new words and of the renewal and enrichment of the old. Thus linguistic facility on the poet's part results in a net gain to the linguistic fund of society. Otto Rank evolves his entire theory of the creative process in art from a consideration of the poet as user of language, and Emerson moves the poet onstage when "the world is put under the mind for verb and noun." Again, T. S. Eliot, speaking on the social role of the poet, prefers to focus on the social role of poetry as art form, and in doing so cites the creation and extension of language as its crucial contribution.

Finally, Charles Morris (8) speaks of poetry as a basic type of discourse among men, fulfilling an appraisive-evaluative function:

"The great significance of poetic discourse lies in the vivid and direct way that it records and sustains achieved valuations, and explores and strengthens novel valuations." (9)

and,

"Poetry then not merely records what in fact men have found significant, but plays a dynamic role in the development and integration of evaluative attitudes and explicit valuations. Poetry at its best is a symbolic antenna of behavior at the immediate frontier of its valuational creativity."

We have considered some aspects of aesthetic symbolism in the special case of poetry, noting that it is a pertinent mode of behaving in society. The question which follows naturally on a discussion of the characteristics of this order of experience is: how is poetic discourse to be differentiated from other types of discourse? The question is one of the most vexed in the history of philosophy, linguistics, criticism, and semantics (or semiotic). It is to be distinguished from the problem of "defining" poetry, a task of poets and critics which has nearly as many solutions as definers. We shall instead use a broader focus and subsume this problem under the crucial one of separating the language and meaning of literature from the language and meaning of other types of communication.

Aesthetic literary signs are first, of the symbolic category, as distinguished from the signals in social and animal intercourse which are non-symbolic. We may follow Morris's discrimination here, classifying as symbols those signs which have a shared meaning and are meaningful to their producers. There is no agreement on whether or not sub-human forms of life can be symbol-users; we do know they use signals, and instances of semi-symbolic activity on the part of, e.g., bees, may be adduced. However, the symbol is characteristically human in that it reaches its most complex and extensive development in the societies of men.

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8. Morris, Charles: *Signs, Language, and Behavior* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946) p. 138.
9. "Art does not, except incidentally, make statements about values, but presents values for direct experience; it is not a language about values but the language of value."

—Morris, in "Science, Art, and Technology"  
Kenyon Review, Vol. 1, 1939: p. 416

But we have many varieties of symbolism, the vehicles of science, philosophy, and literature. Explicit sophisticated symbol systems, or patterns of appropriate signs, are inherent in the institutionalized activities of Western culture. Furthermore, the great importance of popular media of communication from cartoons to movies and television rests on their symbolic efficacy. The problem of discriminating aesthetic symbolism may be exemplified in a consideration of an ancient controversy, that between poetry and science, or between empirically verifiable statements and humanly felt-to-be-true expressions which do not adhere to formal criteria of evidence.

A distinction between the functions of scientific and poetic discourse is peculiarly important to our era. This is an age in which the abundant faith of the West in science has begun to be shaken, partly through the sophistication of scientists themselves about the limitations of their knowledge, and partly through a recognition of science's being too specialized for wholesale allegiance, too prone to neglect relevant areas of human experience. All observers except the most avid devotees of scientism seem to agree that something vital has been left out of our world view in our insistence upon a cognitive ordering of experience. In some sense, the very elegance of logical scientific truth-seeking has militated against full recognition of those events which do not lend themselves well to systematic elucidation. Perhaps the impact of Freud's thought was most importantly felt as a recalling to attention of those elements in human life which resist thorough understanding and systematic appraisal. At any rate the whole field of expressive symbolism has become of primary concern to philosophers and social scientists, although we have not the tools at this point to cope adequately with it. We in social science have been brought to a belated recognition of the significance of aesthetics to the study of man, and brought to it by a parallel recognition of the import of this type of symbolism by the philosophers and semanticists. Indeed it is perhaps not too much to say that one of the crises in Western society consists in the inability

of men to perceive and accommodate an order of experience which by its very nature defies abstraction from life or measurement according to strict canons of truth or falsity.

We might say that the great debate on varieties of symbolism was initiated for our times by the discussion of Ogden and Richards in *The Meaning of Meaning*. (10) They separated what they termed "symbolic" use of language from "evocative" use. Symbolic language aims at the precise transmission of information, while evocative language has the goal of arousing attitudes in an emotional framework. Symbolic usage is "referential," in that we can isolate objects or ideas to which its user explicitly refers. Evocative usage is "emotive" in that it does not convey knowledge or specific referents but performs a global affective task. The refinement of this initial distinction has proceeded mainly by pointing out the cognitive elements in aesthetic experience (Black) (11) and by protesting against so simple a separation (Pollack). (12) It has been emphasized, moreover, that Ogden and Richards' account seems to overweight the importance of scientific cognitive usage, assigning literature and other aesthetic forms to what is essentially a residual conceptual category (Pollack). Richards goes on later, in *Science and Poetry* (13) to state that poetry deals with "pseudo-statements": "The acceptance which a pseudo-statement receives is entirely governed by its effects upon our feelings and attitudes." Although Richards is a defender, not to say an apostle, of poetry, we may say that his theoretical stress has tended to divorce poetry from other modes of discourse to the implicit (intellectual) detriment of the former.

Lewis (14) distinguishes two major facets of language,

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10. Ogden, C. K. and Richards, I. A.: *The Meaning of Meaning* (New York, 1927)
11. Black, Max: Paper in "A Symposium on Emotive Meaning", *The Philosophical Review*, March, 1948.
12. Pollack, T. C.: *The Nature of Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942)

which he labels the cognitive and the "orectic." Orectic language, which presumably includes poetry, is of the conative-affective type, oriented primarily to values and emotional responses rather than to verifiable knowledge. One of his important theses is that the orectic usage comes earliest in the individual's life cycle, and is constantly being displaced in its significance for the socialized person by the emphasis on cognitive language in many areas of education. Thus Lewis points up the possibility that men are socialized out of their dependence upon, and intuitive familiarity with, orectic expressive modes. Incapacities in the orectic sphere are seen as a fundamental problem in highly sophisticated societies, because although orexis continues to be of paramount import, men have lost their explicit awareness of it and their means for dealing with it fully.

A more comprehensive treatment than that of either Richards or Lewis is found in Morris' *Signs, Language, and Behavior*. Refusing to make a simplistic distinction such as the referential-emotive, Morris outlines sixteen major types of discourse, classified by the *uses* of language (e.g., to inform, to evaluate) and the *modes* of signifying involved (e.g., designative, appraisive). On this basis the discourse of science may be characterized as informative-designative, while that of poetry is valuative-appraisive. Morris avoids the truth-falsity argument in this area by couching his discussion in terms broad enough to encompass different uses of the concept "truth." Generally, if an expression denotes it is classified as a "T ascriptor," and further qualifying adjectives are introduced to indicate what kind of denoting is taking place. The symbols of science, for instance, would be called "T-designative ascriptors," that is, "signifying characteristics of objects and situations." As he says of this broad outline: "Our terminology does justice to both the similarities and differences between various

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13. Richards, I. A.: *Science and Poetry* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1935)
14. Lewis, M. M.: *Language in Society* (London, 1948)

kinds of ascriptors, and rescues semiotic from the clamor of those who assert that 'science alone is true' or 'art alone is true' . . . ."

An unusually perceptive account of the differences between literature and other forms of symbolism is given by Pollack in *The Nature of Literature*. He proposes that science may be thought of as communicating the results of an experience or pointing to an experience, whereas literature communicates the essential quality of the experience itself. (15) Scientific language deals with the publicly discriminable aspects of experience, literature with private discriminations. It is important to note that the distinction is not really that between abstract and immediate *usage*, but between abstract and immediate goals of use; although science and poetry both abstract from the life flow, science is aimed at pointing toward a specific aspect of experience for a certain further purpose, literature at recreating the poet's experience in the reader for the sake of the experience itself. This idea that abstraction is as germane to poetry as to other modes of expression is well stated in the concept of the "objective correlative" by T. S. Eliot: (16) "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked." We can see that the idea of art as experience must be refined, that its immediacy, at least in literature, must be viewed as a link between the state of the creator and the state of the appreciator. As Pollack says, ". . . the reader may be given linguistically the experience of observing and attending to an object of art, which in its turn evokes the intended experience."

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15. This "self-reference" of the aesthetic sign is well-expressed by Morris as its iconic property. The value designated is embodied in the work itself, "so that one perceives directly a value structure . . . ."
16. Eliot, T. S.: *The Sacred Wood* (London: Methuen, 1920) p. 92.

But perhaps the essence of the poetic symbol may in the last analysis be best understood poetically. In a way, the very discourse of semantics, of "humanistics," of social science, must forever fall short of complete representation of aesthetic experience. This is another facet of the autonomy of art, that it is in the end untranslatable into other terms; the most penetrating elucidation of a metaphor never succeeds in undercutting it.

*Ars Poetica*

Archibald MacLeish (17)

A poem should be palpable and mute  
as a globed fruit

Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs

Leaving, as the moon releases  
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,  
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs

A poem should be equal to:  
Not true

For all the history of grief  
An empty doorway and a maple leaf

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17. Reprinted in **A Little Treasury of American Poetry**, Oscar Williams, ed. (New York: Scribners, 1948).

For love  
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—  
A poem should not mean  
But be.

*Poetry*

Marianne Moore (18)

I, too, dislike it: there are things that are important beyond all this fiddle.

Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers in it after all, a place for the genuine

Hands that can grasp, eyes  
that can dilate, hair that can rise  
if it must, these things are important not be-  
cause a

high-sounding interpretation can be put upon them but be-  
cause they are useful. When they become so derivative  
as to become unintelligible, the same thing may be said  
for all of us, that we

do not admire what  
we cannot understand: the bat  
holding on upside down or in quest of something  
to

eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll, a tireless  
wolf under a tree, the immovable critic twitching his  
skin like a horse that

feels a flea, the base-  
ball fan, the statistician—  
nor is it valid  
to discriminate against 'business documents and

school-books'; all these phenomena are important. One must  
make a distinction however: when dragged into prom-  
inence by half poets,  
the result is not poetry,

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18. *Ibid.*, p.

nor till the poets among us can be  
‘literalists of  
the imagination’ — above  
insolence and triviality and can present

for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads in them,  
shall we have it. In the meantime, if you demand on  
the one hand, the raw material of poetry in  
all its rawness and  
that which is on the other hand  
genuine, then you are interested in poetry.

If we accept the importance of the emotions to a theory of aesthetic symbolism, it may help to inquire into the possible significance of symbols for emotional states. Even if it is not adequate to divide poetry from other discourse of “more cognitive” character on the sole basis of emotive relevance, we are forced to recognize that fullness of experience implies emotional activity, and that if aesthetic symbols are representative of a more pervasive experience than are the strictly referential, they must include a heightened affective valence.

We live in a world of words, but this world is, biologically speaking, a tenuously artificial one. Without special reference to aesthetic symbols, Burrow (19) proposes that the fore-brain in man, locus of his faculties of symbolic manipulation, is the locus as well of his neurotic difficulties. Men are prone to symbolic dislocation in which their symbolic virtuosity outstrips organic cohesion. The main burden for this dislocation is placed on the human capacity for projection. Burrow is concerned with an exclusively (and incorrectly) negative definition of projection, such that it consists only in the attribution of one’s own unwelcome desires to the motivations of other individuals. Apparently his “cure” is an achievement of a state of non-projective grace, in which tension succumbs to the barbiturate of per-

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19. Burrow, Trigant: “The Social Neurosis: A Study in ‘Clinical Anthropology’ ” in **Philosophy of Science**, Vol. 16, No. 1, January, 1949.

feet organic-symbolic integration. But this resolution of the strains which abstract symbolic activity forces on the individual seems to leave little room for the positive aspects of projection; just as the symbolic-physiologic gulf may be man's tragic dualism, so it may be his greatest glory. For what are the great works of art but projective responses to life? Only, in this case the projections become, by virtue of their societal relevance and excellence of form, honored entities. The question is forthrightly posed, however: do the acts of men in creating and appreciating aesthetic symbols tend to promote personality disorder?

One careful student of language finds expressions of emotional intensity to be concomitants of emotional disturbances. Zipf (20) states that emotional intensity in language is found where the personality is in a condition of change, ". . . a breach in the established patterns of behavior." Since nature, according to Zipf, desires a re-equilibration of the pattern which has been breached, a vital step in the return to stable behavior after an emotional upheaval is the translation of affect-laden experiences into prosaic language. Therefore we might conclude that the creator, and in extreme cases the very acute appreciator, of aesthetic linguistic patterns, is exposed to a variety of strain, since obviously novel aesthetic experience *does* shake the mundane adjustment of daily living. We must be cautious of Zipf's doctrine, however, since he falls into the cognitive trap by setting emotionally intense language and articulatedness of meaning in inverse ratio, a proposition that can only be advanced when "meaning" has already been confined in a strict referential straitjacket.

Aesthetic symbolism is to be distinguished from other kinds of symbolism, then, but the differentiation cannot be based on a definition of the situation which posits a "competition" of modes of discourse. As Richards stresses, the poetry-science aerimony is usually based on a misunder-

20. Zipf, George K.: *The Psychobiology of Language* (Houghton, Mifflin: 1935)

standing of aesthetic patterns which take evocative and strictly designative symbols to be trying to do the same thing. They are not. They have each, along with many further modes of discourse, a legitimate function which quite clearly can never usurp the other's field. If we can remember that virtually all symbolism abstracts from the full reality of man-in-time, but that different modes abstract for different purposes, then we can easily accept this theorem: that the variability of experience implies a congeries of possible perceptions, perceptions retaining independent validities hinging upon the specific *criteria* of validity which one chooses to invoke. Aesthetic symbolism aims at a recreation of experience. An appreciable part of the creator's experience is to be renewed and evoked for the respondent through the presentation of art forms as stimuli. The fuller the response, assumedly, the better. And poetry embraces ambiguity; the poet is not shocked if his work arouses varieties of experience. Other symbolism, of which science and logic are type cases, aims at the elucidation of strictly defined referents and the relations among them. And the scientist is shocked if the linguistic instruments he employs do not cue the reader to exact recognition of the entities to which he is "strictly referring."

Aesthetic symbolism, because it is affect-laden, may tend to evoke in its user a certain kind of mental disturbance. Extended awareness of one's own emotional states *may* be pathic since it involves the recognition of inconsistencies and irreconcilable themes in the personality — or in life itself. As Lewis phrases it, "To this extent the civilized man may be more neurotic than the uncivilized, because he is more literate."

The greatest direct and indirect influence of poetry is on the language tradition of a culture:

"The poetry of a people takes its life from the people's speech and in turn gives life to it; and represents its highest point of consciousness, its greatest power and its most delicate sensibility."

—T. S. Eliot (21)

It is important to social science because it affects people through their language, and thereby influences their cathexes and values. It is a primary datum of experience, because it represents the perceptual mass of certain highly aware social actors, the professional perceivers or poets.

Richards has indicated that the task of differentiating science and poetry is not necessarily the sole province of science. Some of the answers for which we search in the social sciences may in fact be best phrased in poetic discourse. For we are pursuing the study of man, and such discourse must be conceived of as an integral part of man's behavior. At any rate the recognition of the arts as significant ways of experience, and the investigation of their place in social systems, is an imperative given to the social scientist today, especially if he is a member of Western culture which has for years blocked out aesthetic symbolism from its scientific world-view. The gravest danger inheres in the effort, however, because of a constant temptation to "reduce" aesthetics to expedient simplifications: to think of art as "merely emotive" in some fuzzy, flabby manner, less disciplined and less important than science; to see it as only a manifestation of specific psychological states in creator or appreciator; to relegate it to sole dependence on a particular class background or cultural matrix, in the vein of unsophisticated proponents of the sociology of knowledge.

The apprehension of the importance of other than scientific symbols is seen by Morris as a major contribution of the science of signs:

"Only the individual who utilizes the signs of the artists, the prophets, and the philosophers, as well as the information given to him by the scientists, is living at the level of a complex individual. To show that signs other than scientific play a basic role in life, and yet to do this in a way which does not minimize in the least the unique importance of science, is perhaps the most

21. Eliot, T. S.: *The Use of Poetry* (Cambridge: 1933)

22. Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 240

important single task which semiotic can today perform." (22)

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## Serpentine Ornamentation and Anal Regression

by

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In a paper published in this journal (1) on serpentine ornamentations, such as the Indo-American winged or feathered serpents or step-coil, the Greek meander, grotesques and arabesques, I attempted to demonstrate that this ornamentation had a latent, unconscious meaning, viz., the representation of male genital organs, but portrayed with anal regression, i.e., with representations of excrements also intervening in them. In them there happens something similar to what occurs in the symptoms of obsession neuroses in which genital contents take on anal aspects. Thus an obsessive patient's fear of soiling symbolizes regressively a repressed wish for coitus. This conclusion, on serpentine ornamentations may also be demonstrated from associations obtained in psychoanalytic treatments which are in some way related with ornamentation.

Like every plastic art, ornamentation and its derived forms, such as writing, are sublimations of urinary and anal instincts. Thus it was very difficult for a female patient to write with a pen, because to make movements with her hand and finger reminded her of the time when her fiancé used to caress her anus with his finger, which made her feel humiliated. With the pen she associated the penis. But the nib for her was not "the tip of the penis but the base of the penis, the part attached to the testicles" and the front end of the penholder looked to her like an anus. That is to say, that

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1. Angel Garma: The Indo-American Winged or Feathered Serpent, the Step Coil and the Greek Meander. "The American Imago", XI, 1954, 113-145.

according to her, what did the writing was not the glans but what she considered to be the anal part of the penis.

On the other hand, there is a joke in which a father is furious because the declaration of love made by his daughter's fiancé to her and written by urinating upon the dust in the garden, was in his daughter's handwriting, i.e., it had been written by her holding her fiancé's penis while he was urinating. In this joke it is not the anal, but urethral instincts that are fused with the genital ones to produce writing.

The anal regression of genitality explains the fact that coitus is vulgarly designated by anal terms, such as "euclear" (from: culo equals anus) in Latin-American countries or "eu" (anus) for the vulva in France. In English the obscene expression for coitus is "to screw", in the adoption of which there must intervene anal instincts, in addition to the genital ones, for in coitus the essential movements are back and forth, and it is excrement that is usually represented in a spiral form. The helicoidal element in "screwing" would be a kind of result of the combined back and forth movement and the circular or spiral one. In other words, a mixture of genital and anal representations. In ornamentation the serpentine may be equated with the helicoidal, as it is like the projection of a helicoid upon a plane.

In dreams of homosexual persecution, sometimes some of the symbols have a helicoidal shape and symbolize the rectum, where anal coitus is performed. Thus, there was a spiral staircase with this symbolism in the following passive homosexual dream in a patient:

"I was your pupil and you were going to give a lesson. We were ascending a *spiral staircase* and I was going in front".

Very interesting associations for the psychoanalytic understanding of ornamental serpentine curves were those of a student of psychoanalysis at a period of his treatment, when he suffered from urethritis produced by an infection of trichomonae, the consequence of anal coitus with a woman.

His disease provoked a partial regression of his genital libido to anality, whereby in his dreams and fantasies there appeared many representations of curves, above all spiral and helicoidals, which were symbolizations of anal coitus. Thus in one of his dreams he symbolized the anal coitus that infected him as follows:

"It was as if I were lying beside something, *a curved, perhaps spiral, surface*, on my left side. Perhaps a piece of cloth with a hole in it. Something yellowish in colour with a tear in it".

"I saw a woman with a crest of plumes on her head and another tuft that seemed to be coming out of her behind."

In the contents of a yellowish, curved surface with a hole in it, the first part of the dream clearly represents the buttocks of the woman with whom he had anal coitus.

The woman of the second part of the dream symbolized the trichomonae which are elegant creatures with graceful filament adornments.

Many of this analysand's fantasies during the period of his urethritis referred to submarine caves, that stood for the bladder full of urine. They often contained sharks or submarines, which were symbolizations of the protozoae that had infected him. Sometimes, if anal element intervened in these fantasies, then these symbolizations of the parasites were of a *curved, spiral shape*, similar to trichinae. At other times, when phallie components were added to the anal ones, there then often appeared in his fantasies the helicoidal curve of "screwing". For instance, in one fantasy, the above mentioned submarines, instead of travelling around in the submarine caves, i.e., through urine, did so inside the earth, i.e., amid feces and for this purpose they were furnished, for and aft, with *helicoidal corkscrewlike perforators*.

In connection with one of his dreams, this analysand had associations concerning his aunt defecating and described her excrement as *twisting* around her anus. He

compared this twisting of the excrement with the *ornamental signs outside barber's shops* which represent a stylized version of the bandage of the bleeders of older days who were also barbers. Thus he visualized the barber's sign as a curved excrement.

While analyzing a female patient, and with her authorization, this analysand placed between the two of them the microphone of a recorder. The patient reacted by harshly criticizing her husband, i. e., the analyst and by weeping so much that he, in fright, at once removed the microphone. From the patient's criticisms, the placing of the microphone behind her unconsciously symbolized for him his attempting an anal coitus with her, like the one that caused his urethritis, whereby the microphone symbolized his penis.

The candidate was so shocked and beset with guilt-feelings that he felt his behaviour to have been filled with aggressive anal wishes. At his next session with me he went on fantasizing about the event. He imagined that he was inserting the microphone into the patient's vagina and emptying out her inside with *spiral movements*. He said that the recorder he used had a part that went up and down and at the same time revolved, which symbolized his penis with coitus movements made within the woman's rectum, movements which thus took on a helicoidal form. At the same moment he remembered a joke about an engineering student who explained to one of his friends how coitus should be performed comparing the movements with those of a percussion perforating machine with ball-governors, they were watching at the time. His friend afterwards told him that his coitus had been a great success, except for his inability to swing his testicles round, like the ball-governor in the machine.

The analysand ended this sequence of fantasies by saying that after the *emptying out* of the vagina by the microphone with *spiral movements*, the patient would be left with something thick and empty, like a rectum. This he associated with the enemas his mother had given him to empty him of excrement and clear his rectum. That is to say, that

in his fantasies of anal coitus with his patient, this analysand carried out actively upon his patient what he had suffered passively from his mother.

To sum up, the data presented indicate that the frequent associations of analysands with curved, spiral or helicoidal contents have a latent symbolism at once genital and anal, just as do ornamental serpentine curves. Knowledge of this symbolism facilitates the understanding and psycho-analytic evaluation of both of them.

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# Projection and Identification In the Artistic Perception

by

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Since the time of the formal discovery of aesthetics (1) by Baumgarten much has been said about the nature of art; many theories have been advanced, but the problems of what art is remained an object of further dispute. The old saying *De gustibus non est disputandum* retained its applicability and stimulates further the diversity of views. With the advancement of psychology a new aesthetical approach crystallized itself — what exists is only man's opinion. The originator of this view was Herbart. His were the opinions concerning art which contributed to the establishment of a trend, known in the literary scholarship as psychologism. It would be, of course, a mistake to ascribe to Herbart the sole origin of such ideas. Kant spoke much earlier about the subjective judging capacity (*Urteilskraft*) which forms judgments without reasoning, and produces pleasure without desire (*Urtheil ohne Begriff und Vergnügen ohne Begehr*). (2)

In its rapid development psychologism split into a variety of schools, each claiming the infallibility of its assertions and research. The youngest and the most pretentious among them was that of Freud, who himself proved to be

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1. M. Schasler, **Kritische Geschichte der Aesthetik**, Vol. I, p. 13.
2. Perhaps the most conspicuous exponent of this subjective comprehension of art was a German aesthetician Richard Kralik who in his **Weltschönheit, Versuch einer allgemeinen Aesthetik** spoke about a pentafoliate of arts growing out of the subjective perception (p. 175): taste (**Die Kunst des Geschmacksinns**) smell (**Die Kunst des Geruchsins**), touch (**Die Kunst des Tastsinns**), hearing (**Die Kunst des Gehörsinns**), sight (**Die Kunst des Gesichtsinns**)

extremely productive in this respect. (3) Despite all the originality of thought, however, psychoanalytic exploration in art failed to answer many whys the art critic encounters. Ceaseless references to libidinal tendencies do not sound like a satisfactory answer to various questions concerning the form and content of any artistic creation. In a simplified form, according to Freud and his ardent follower, Rank, (4) art is an unconscious pretension, an insincerity with oneself, a serious neurosis — briefly, an inhibited sexual longing. (5)

"With such a theory," as S. E. Hyman says, "only one study can be written, since every additional one would turn out to say the same thing. Ernest Jones could do a beautiful job finding out the underlying Oedipus complex in *Hamlet*, but had he gone on to analyze *Lear*, *a Midsummer Night's Dream*, or the *Sonnets* he would have found to his surprise that they reflected Shakespeare's Oedipus complex too. In fact, granting his theories, he would have made the same discovery about any other work of art." (6)

However, whether one favors the objective or the subjective theories of art he has to admit the active participation of the individual in it. Art which does not stimulate and promote the merging of the subjective with the objective hardly could be called art. The aesthetic phenomena are such only by virtue of their potency to promote in us the maximum of pleasurable emotions in a short time. This active relationship between aesthetic object and the one who perceives it discards Kant's and similar ideas which speak

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3. S. Freud, *Psychoanalytische Studien an Werken der Dichtung und Kunst*, Leipzig, 1924
4. O. Rank, *Art and Artist, Creative Urge and Personality Development*, New York, 1932
5. One of the most recent attempts to prove this basic Freudian dogma in art has been made by Daniel E. Schneider who discussed the following writers and artists from the Oedipal point of view: Sophocles, Chagall, Picasso, VonGogh, Arthur Miller and Shakespeare (D. E. Schneider, *Psychoanalyst and the Artist*, New York, 1950. Farrar, Straus & Co.)
6. S. E. Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, New York, 1948, Alfred A. Knoph, p. 166

about beauty as a certain kind of disinterested pleasure experienced by us.

Admittance of the psychological nature of art raises a question concerning the quality and nature of experiences with which we are possessed during the art-perception. This question is not a new one, and there is a voluminous literature dealing with it. Unfortunately, the answers are as diverse as are the definitions of art. Critics, however, agree that there are several types which, more or less, react in a stereotype way. Thus, Müller-Freinfels divides the art-consumers into three categories: a) *ekstatiker*, b) *mitspieler*, c) *zuschauer*, (7) suggesting by this that not all people experience the emphatic states (introjective, projective, or identifying). The last category (onlookers) are nothing but passive observers who coolly observe and do not involve themselves emotionally in the object of their observation. In other words, they treat the observed object exclusively from outside, intellectually and not emotionally, while the first two are considered to be the active participants in this emotional involvement.

Undoubtedly, there is such a category as onlookers (critics and people with no background for perceiving art), but whether they are art-consumers is another question.

In general, those who are capable of experiencing the artistic object by the totality of their ego either project their desires and phantasies into the perceived object, or identify themselves with it. There is *non tertia datum*. What are then the first and second phenomenon as manifested in artistic perception? Those opinions predominate which hold that artistic projection is identical with one which we encounter in the various neurotic and psychotic deviations. In quality, perhaps, it is so, but not in magnitude. In mental distortions projection is an ego defense-mechanism, and is not understood as an illusion but as an active determinant of behavior. (8) Here is how Franz describes it:

"When a repressed tendency can no longer be kept out of consciousness, a radical defense may become necessary. An example is attributing a repressed tendency to another person.

The ego can neither accept the subjective tendency as its own nor repress it. The only solution is then to deny its belonging to the scope of one's own personality. Through projection, the ego abandons, to some degree at least, its reality-testing function by misinterpreting reality and thus returns to a primitive stage of development when external reality and internal (psychological) reality were not yet differentiated." (9)

Although the opinion of the distinguished Alexander tends toward mythical interpretation of this problem (primitive stage, J.F.) it does stress one characteristic fact, namely, that projection emerges as a radical defence at the time when a repressed tendency cannot be kept under the censorship. But since there is no such thing as a line of demarcation between the normal and the abnormal, we have, therefore, to admit that the projection in one and the other instances is quantitative rather than qualitative. Michaelangelo's idea that the block of marble possesses all the features of a statue the artist is going to carve is similar principally to that of a neurotic who transplants his inner experience into the outside world. This fact is stressed explicitly by Ernest Kris in his recent publication. "If we attempt to delineate the difference," he says, "we may contrast the compulsion of the psychotic with the freedom of the artist. Nevertheless, a common element remains. For if we say that the psychotic sees hallucinated figures in his piece of wood, we must also recognize that with hallucination we designate but one point in a series extended between imagination and per-

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7. Müller-Freinfels, **Psychologie der Kunst**, Berlin, 1912, Vol. I, p. 167.
8. Numerous attempts were made to utilize art as a psychotherapeutic medium. Such projective techniques as finger-painting (Peter J. Napoli, "Finger Painting," **Projective Technique**, Prentice-Hall, New York, 1952, Ch. 14), design (Raymond B. Cattell, *Ibid*, p. 55), Dramatic Productions Test (Murray, H. A.), **Explorations in Personality**, New York, 1938, Oxford University Press), drawing (Goodenough, F. L., **Measurement of Intelligence by Drawing**, Yonkers, World Book Co.,) or psychodrama, (L. J. Moreno, **Psychodrama**, New York, 1946, Benson House) all point to this identity.

ception, and that in this case normal and pathological mechanism may merge." (10)

The statement of "quantitative difference" needs some elaboration. Why, for example, does a spectator of Hamlet, in spite of his strong emotional involvement, or a strong projection or identification, retain external control? The answer, it seems to me lies in the problem of emotions which accompany his perception. Without hesitation I would say that the emotions of daily happenings and those in the theater are of two different types. The question how these emotions originate, what is their potency and duration, is answered rather originally by a Russian prerevolutionary scholar Ovsianiko-Kulikovski.

"If we juxtapose," says he, "the artificial sorrow, stimulated, for example, by Pushkin's poem — I walk along the noisy street — or by Lermontov's — It is so boring and sad, and there is no one to shake hands with — with the natural sorrow experienced by us at the thought of death, then we shall see that the first one (for convenience, let us designate the first one SP — *Sentimentum poeticum* and the other SN — *Sentimentum Naturale*) does not cause such mental torment than the other one, that in it there is nothing personal; a man is sad but this sadness is somewhat general and moreover softened and elaborated by the activity of some other emotion which somehow turns it into a pleasure. Naming this other emotion SL — *Sentium liricum* — we receive the following formula: SP equals SN plus SL" (11)

The above quoted Ernest Kris calls this *Sentimentum*

9. Franz Alexander, "Development of the Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis," *Dynamic Psychiatry*, The University of Chicago Press, 1952, p. 14.
10. Ernest Kris, *Psychoanalytic Exploration in Art*, International University Press, Inc., New York, 1952, p. 115.
11. D. N. Ovsianiko-Kulikovski, "O znachenii iazkoznaniiia dlia psikhologii mysli,"/ About the significance of linquistics for the psychology of thought/, *Voprosy teorii i psichologii iskustva*, Kharkov, 1911, Vol. I, p. 31.
12. Ernest Kris, *Psychoanalytic . . .*, p. 30.
13. O. E. Sperling, "Illusion, Naive and Controlled," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 1951, Vol. XX.

*Poeticum* the "aesthetic illusion," (12) and O. E. Sperling speaks about the "illusion naive and controlled." (13) This poetic sentiment, or fully developed aesthetic illusion, is a matter of acquisition and learning.

The most complicated problem to analyse is the process of projection. This process is utterly subjective and no generalization is possible. One thing is certain; projecting people reject, or at least minimize, many qualities of the perceived object. From this point of view a modern painting which does not offer the stability of form and content, and which sometime is loose to a point of obscurity, but is highly suggestive, is an ideal medium for projection. (14) Realistic painting, sculpture and other forms of art do not offer such a possibility. They are ideal for identification and not for projection. Hence I can venture a presumption that at no time will one or the other trend in art disappear. There will always be individuals who will tend to project, and therefore idealize one type of art, and others who will identify themselves with the skillfully finished art and adore realistic art.

The reasons behind projection in artistic perception are the same as those in mental anomalies and usually are determined by the idiosyncratic aspects of the human psyche, i.e., by elements which are not readily assignable to the known psychological processes. (15)

While projection could be named an aggressive act, identification represents a humiliating one. Here a man

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14. "Many individuals find difficulty in projecting an image side by side with an object. They don't care to see a visualized ink-bottle to the right of the one being used. This is because reality-thinking fights so hard with a wish-thinking that images are pretty completely banished from the average man's life or else appear so dim and ghost-like that they cannot hold their own beside the real object. For this reason many people if asked to visualize an object at once close their eyes in order that there be no competition bodily and mental seeing." (J. E. Downey, *Creative Imagination*, New York, 1929, p. 28)
15. For Reference and bibliography see D. J. Van Lennep, "The Four Picture Test," *Projective Technique*, p. 149-180.

does not impose his guilt or faults upon an observed object, but accepts its superiority and identifies himself with it. Very often the growing children take over behavior patterns from adults by means of this identification. "Identification," says Eduardo Weiss, "of one person with others is an important and complicated mental phenomenon. Sympathy, empathy, understanding of our fellow-men, pity, compassion and conscience which produce feelings of guilt, are based on various forms of identification." (16) Thus, identification is overcompensation either of inferior mental or physical qualities, or a rejection of the existing *status quo*. In artistic perception where the aesthetic illusion is a dominant factor, identification is interwoven with the ever-present awareness of the artificial character of the whole event. Lack of this awareness is the sign either of paranoid delusions or the lack of knowledge to distinguish art from reality. If grown-ups would imitate movie-heroes (would identify themselves with them) in the same way children do, then one would have to suspect the stability of their mental balance. To what extent identification (in the sense of imitation) exists in daily reality one can see in the field of fashion; teen-agers' adoration of movie stars, etc. Identification, therefore, is an essential factor in art perception, and without it there could hardly be a genuine contact between art and people.

Not rarely, both projection and identification are applied at the same time. This fact is motivated by the complexity of human personality. No normal man is possessed by exclusive drives which are ordinarily either projected or rejected. His mental wholeness is composed of heterogeneous components, which despite their opposition, somehow resolve themselves into a synthetic unity. From this point of view, although it is not my theme to deliberate on the ethical side of art, good art aims toward the satisfaction of this, if one

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16. Eduardo Weiss, "History of Metapsychological Concepts," *Dynamic Psychiatry*, p. 59. For a good study on identification see: P. Federn, "Ichgrenzen, Ichstarke und Identifizierung," *Almanach der Psychoanalyse*, Vienna, 1937, Internationaler psychoanalytischer Verlag.

may call it, synthetical diversity. Art which seeks to satisfy only one of those elements (sexual longings, anti-social acts) could hardly be called art, stimulating and appealing though it may be. It ignores the wholeness of human personality, tends to magnify specific elements in it and consequently, promotes the destruction of this synthesis. It paves the way toward neurotic deviations, criminal acts, and all kinds of psychic enormities.

We would like to close this article by saying that art, by offering an opportunity to project and identify, is of great psychotherapeutic value. The fact that people feel content, satisfied and relieved of emotional tension after reading a novel, seeing a drama, or attending an art-exhibition stresses the psychological nature of art, and rejects, once and for all, the "l'art pour l'art" theory. (17)

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17. Müller-Freinfels, **Psychologie Der Kunst**, Berlin, 1912, Vol. II, p. 200.

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## The Wolf As Condensation

by

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The wolf as symbol has been of intermittent interest to me for several years. It was Géza Róheim's article, *The Wolf and the Seven Kids*, in the Psychoanalytic Quarterly (Vol. XXII, No. 2, 1953) that stimulated me to further consideration of the wolf. I was able to discover more about my own private dramas in which the wolf figured as protagonist and at the same time was moved to learn more about the wolf and his meanings in the broader cultural sphere. I had not shared Dr. Róheim's doubt that the wolf who ate the kids was father, although I agreed it was mother; thus, I think the wolf is father and mother simultaneously. But before I outline my reasons, I should like to draw attention to the wolf as significant figure for European man.

The wolf is an animal whose habitat is widely spread in Europe, Asia, and North America, and has been a common rapacious foe to the domestic economy of human beings in its attacks on their flocks. Yet the wolf, as we shall see, is not always bad. It is often bad, evil, cruel, voracious, and identified with what is Satanic. To speak of the devil was in Latin *lupus in fabula*, while in French *parler du loup, c'est voir sa queue*. Other expressions include *méfiez-vous du loup; genus ave luporum atque canum; hac urget lupus, hac canis angit*; to keep the wolf from the door; a wolf in sheep's clothing; he is a wolf; like a wolf on the fold; cry wolf; hungry as a wolf. But in both European and Asian folklore it is the wolf who suckles the human child and a wild child is a "wolf child" who has lacked a human mother's care but has been nurtured by a wolf. Kipling created a whole wolf family for a human child. The most famous wolf is probably the wolf-mother of Romulus and Remus, founders of the Eternal City, immortalized in fable and in statues still to be seen in Italy.

While in India it is the tiger and in South America the jaguar into which men turn or are turned, in Europe it is most frequently the wolf. Werewolf or werewolf apparently takes its root from the Anglo-Saxon *wer* for man, close to the Latin *vir*. Werewolves appeared in Wales, England, Ireland, South France, Germany, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Servia, Russia, Poland, and Bohemia. In a Greek myth, Lycaon was turned into a wolf because he ate human flesh. In Virgil is found the interesting notion that a man seen by a wolf before he saw the wolf lost his speech. Sometimes the werewolf was one who voluntarily submitted to a Satanic agency in order to eat human flesh, while others were victimized innocents. In the Sixteenth Century in Prussia the werewolves were said to have formed a college, and during the same century in France werewolves were tried and in their human form themselves admitted to cannibalism. Witches in the Middle Ages often confessed to being werewolves. While the Encyclopedia Britannica expresses surprise at the readiness with which such confessions were made, several motives can be hypothesized, but the most powerful may well have been genuine credence based on dreams and fantasies. Often the human becomes wolf by drinking something, and werewolves are associated with night and darkness. An instructive Armenian story tells of a woman who on account of her deadly sins became a wolf each night for seven years. First, she ate her own children, then others related to her, and then had to roam the village and the countryside. Yet, again, some of the wolves were good, destroyed heretics, guarded the severed head of a martyr and rescued a victim from an attack by foxes.

The wolf as symbol thus contains not only the associations of cannibalism, drinking, and other incorporative activities as malign, but also the aspect of protection and nurture, of suckling. In addition, the wolf is sometimes male and sometimes female, and, I believe, can at the same time represent mother, father, eating, being eaten, and the excitement and fears around sexual attraction.

The last I discovered several years ago upon reading

Djuna Barnes' remarkable *Nightwood*. At three in the morning when Nora seeks the doctor and for the first time climbs the six flights to his room, she finds the man sitting up in bed wearing a wig with long curls. In the room are laces, pomades, rouges, ladies' underclothes, perfumes, and other feminine articles, yet the room itself maintained a character as "muscular" as a "boxer's training camp". Beneath the blonde wig the doctor's cheeks were rouged. Momentarily Nora thinks, "God, children know something they can't tell; they like Red Riding Hood and the wolf in bed!" I realized that I had not told, but that I too had liked the wolf, found him attractive. It seems to me now that the story of the little girl and the wolf has many meanings which it condenses, and that the Wolf and the Seven Kids is even more compressed.

Let us briefly review the story of Little Red Riding Hood but use the name Red Cap which would seem to be a closer translation. The little girl had received a red velvet cap for a gift. As Red Cap sets out for grandmother's, her mother warns her to be good, not to run, and not to break the flask she carries. Once in the woods, Red Cap meets the apparently friendly wolf and is not frightened. The wolf lures Red Cap into picking flowers and she forgets about grandmother, but upon finally arriving at the house she has a premonition. The wolf has swallowed grandmother, but Red Cap, seeing him in grandmother's bed and having previously encountered him, fails to recognize him. A flirtatious passage ensues: "The better to see you with, my dear!" The wolf swallows Red Cap, but the woodsmen slit open the wolf to let her and grandmother out. Red Cap says it was dark in there. As in the story of the Wolf and the Seven Kids, stones are placed within the wolf and cause his death. Red Cap resolves to resist wolves, mind her mother, and the next time a wolf appears at grandmother's, the two are allies and kill him.

The oedipal theme is apparent. Mother-grandmother as mother sends Red Cap on the errand without offering her any of the cakes, hurries her on without certain warn-

ings but does give unsympathetic orders to be good, mind her manners and not break the flask. As grandmother, she is at the other end of the path, too, and is returned to where the three (primary triangle) trees (masculinity) are oaks (fecundity). The red cap (femininity), a gift from grandmother, attracts the wolf along the way and the flowers (femininity), too, through the wolf's agency serve as snare. Wolf (father) exploits Red Cap's innocence, but since mother did not have to give her directions to the house in the woods, it must be assumed the little girl had been there before. And since another wolf will appear later, it would also seem Red Cap must at some time have been warned, but on this occasion represses what she knows. (Was it not careless of mother not to admonish Red Cap and was this not due to mother's repression of the fact that little girls can meet wolves?) Diverted to the flowers by the wolf, Red Cap has a premonition (guilt) subsequent to her defection. And on seeing the wolf, she again engages in denial by pretending he is grandmother. Now Red Cap is devoured and reborn of the male. Henceforth, she will identify with mother-grandmother in order to be safe. When next a wolf comes, the two will kill him for Red Cap has chosen or been forced to choose.

Thus we have the triangle, the attraction, the temptation, the danger, the choice and a new or stronger alignment leading to resolution through fuller identification. The identification rests on a shared experience, a shared jeopardy, and is thus all the stronger, one would suppose. It is an identification with, but also an identification against the dangerous which shortly before seemed safe, if only with the defense of denial. Grandmother "never knew how to make enough" of Red Cap and consequently was not too difficult to identify with as the good mother.

While the oedipal situation is dramatized, there runs throughout the primitive theme of orality. Red Cap is given cakes and wine to take to grandmother, but does not stop to eat any herself; her hunger is denied and her desire to eat is not strong enough to prevent her from being willing

to give food. However, by the time she has loitered among the flowers, the hunger has grown and the oral need now cannot be handled so easily. Instead, it becomes frightening and is projected onto the wolfish mouth. Fear of her own wolfishness and of being eaten are one and the same, just as the fear is also the desire. The desire to be eaten, to be inside, is also the desire for passive sustenance in the dark place and leads to new life where Red Cap emerges again, this time from father. There appears to be here a fantasy preceding the time when mother's and father's attributes and differences are distinguishable. A later knowledge that father does not have babies is portrayed in this story and *The Wolf and the Seven Kids* in the denial of life within the father by filling him with inert rocks. His death, as a result of the rocks, represents a throwing away of the fantasy that he can have children, and may at the same time represent feces in the way Dr. Róheim states. The next wolf, or the new father who is undisguised (for the purposes of the story) is immediately dangerous. He looks wicked about the eyes. His orality is feared for it is the projection now of Red Cap's own new dangerousness, her identification with mother, her femininity, her female voracity, her *vagina dentata*, as well as being based on the necessity to admit wolves are dangerous.

Thus the wolf in *Red Cap* would appear to represent good and bad; giver and taker; sexual object desired and feared; mother, while the disguise, though a thin one, is operating; father as pleasant seducer and then as danger; and mother-father where a lack of differentiation or discrimination of attributes is related to oral aggression (where hunger means being devoured by grandmother-mother-wolf-father) and sexual-reproductive characteristics (with rebirth from father, here from the stomach.)

The infant is comfortable when its passive-receptive needs are met, with the oral a prototype of receptivity of other sorts — tactile, visual, aural, intellectual. Yet, from the start, the infant's own active participation in sucking and digesting is essential to its preservation; and its sensual

gratification in sucking, obtained apart from food intake, is also prototype—of eroticism, curiosity, exploration, learning, and assertion. When hunger or other discomfort causes distress, the reaction of even the smallest infant is impressive for its immediacy, strength, and directness. Thus, from the beginning of life, passivity and assertion of need are present emotionally. Both aspects and all their later ramifications throughout the personality pattern are expressed, acted out, tested, and molded against, toward, and in relationship with each parent. The oral need is most commonly met by mother, but since it continues as long as life does, it also is a component in the father-child relationship, and against the father and the mother the fantasies must be tested as inner growth and environmental demands proceed.

We take in food, liquids, sights, sounds, air, touch, words, ideas, semen, energy, and the stimuli of others' conscious and unconscious productions. We give out air, sounds, perspiration, urine, stool, semen, menstrual blood, words, ideas, emotions, acts, children — having, in order to sustain life and meet our needs, made use of what we needed from what we took in. The infant has sensations connected with intake and output. He may vomit or be exposed to enemas or suppositories so that, in a sense, directions sometimes actually are reversed. But even without this, learning what goes in where and what comes out where is not a simple task, especially since what holds true for mother does not in all respects obtain with father. Must not we all have speculated and struggled with the ideas of father having babies, breast and penis having an equivalence, babies coming out of the anus, mouth, stomach wall, and that progress into the body or out of the body can be from either end and into and out of either parent? These fantasies reflect what is as yet not learned and are entwined with body sensations and the feelings attached to them as well as with feelings toward each parent and each sibling of the same or opposite sex. They are thus in dynamic relationship with passive and aggressive strivings — oral, anal, urethral, phallic — and all the frustrations and pleasures experienced in each phase of

growth, i.e., the child's ongoing development in terms of mastery and anxiety.

The animal fantasies exemplify the manifest confusion partly based on lack of intellectual mastery, and the emotional content. The interconnections of oral and sexual fantasies and of each with passivity and aggressivity are myriad. By the time a tale is told — Red Cap or The Seven Kids — the oral and the sexual in all their elaborations cannot be completely discreet. In each is the other. And it seems to me The Wolf and The Seven Kids contains these same elements, although in a more abbreviated form than does the story of Red Cap, and with the addition of the sibling theme. It is the youngest kid who hides in the clock, escapes the trouble the others suffer, and thus is favored, as Dr. Róheim points out. Mother goat goes to seek food, but takes too long and the hungry kids open the door to the wolf who eats them. Subsequently, the wolf is cut open, they are saved, and he drowns after being filled with rocks. Again we have oral fantasies with the young devoured but returned to life through the father's body.

In neither story is any other father mentioned. Red Cap was not warned against the first wolf, but she had seen him in the woods and it is difficult to believe grandma's cap alone and without the self-blinding of Red Cap could have been a successful disguise. The kids were clearly warned against the wolf by mother. He comes first without disguise, but the kids tell him his voice gives him away. He eats chalk and returns to be told his black paws betray him. Red Cap and the kids, in effect, invite what is to come. As with all of us and as with Oedipus there is a moral innocence and yet an original sin, an ambiguity, so that by the time we can spin a story we know the protagonist, or self, is implicated, too, and is an active agent in the plot. The wolf seduces, but the children invite seduction and danger. Dr. Róheim believes the story of the kids is a very early one. If Red Cap with its clear sexual symbolism is later, it represents many of the same elements, and may represent also a dissatisfaction with the earlier tale and a need to elaborate

and make clearer just who the wolf is that tricks, devours, and is killed.

In any case, the wolf as symbol is manifold, multiplex, protean. Man, in his ages-long relationship with the wolf, has made him so. Onto wolf man has projected father, mother, danger, safety and rescue, evil and good, voraciousness and nurture, and the fascination and peril of his own sexuality. Only as man knows the wolf within him will he be free.

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